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ANNA HARRIET DRURY

AUTHORESS OF FRIENDS AND FORTUNE



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CHAPTER I.



GOOD bye, dearest Julia; good bye! write soon: it is wretched work parting with you," were the last sounds that reached the ears of Julia Seymour, as the train moved along from the Great . . . . Station, and bore her away from the friends whose delight she had been for more than six months. Words often used, and often meaning but little; but conveying a mingled sense of pain and pleasure to one, whose frank, loving nature made it impossible not to be sincere in loving her in return. The tears swam in her sunny eyes, unaccustomed as they were to sorrow: and though she could not forget she was going home, to those dearest to her heart, the consciousness that all her late pleasures had rolled away like a dream, gave her a pang that it seemed alike ungrateful to subdue, and unnatural to cherish. The train, meanwhile, relentless as the course of time, swept on its iron track; the last traces of London disappeared—the last skeleton row of houses—the last pile of bricks; green fields lay on either side, dotted with sheep, or adorned with tempting files of haycocks: cattle grazing and whisking away the flies without

so much as turning a head to look at the now familiar monster that had so disturbed the digestion of their grandfathers and grandmothers : pretty peeps of scenery among long intervals of straight banks ; and striking displays of the sublime and beautiful in the way of tunnels ; in short all those objects of amusement provided gratis for the railway traveller, by degrees beguiled Julia Seymour's attention, and led her to recollect with comfort the burst of welcome awaiting her at home. With that, came the remembrance of divers little parcels, crammed at the last moment into her basket, that blessed resource of the forgetful and the hurried : and she was sometime occupied in arranging these, so as to avoid any needless crushing and squeezing : and then she opened the favourite volume that was to have been such a resource all the way ; but even Amy Herbert failed to arrest her wandering attention. The noise of the engine was uncongenial to the quiet of Emmerton Cottage ; and Emily Morton's sorrows, that had so excited her the night before, now found her as hard hearted as Miss Cunningham herself. So the book was shut, and Julia leant back in her seat, and began conning over her mother's last letter, and was soon wrapped in a cloud of conjectures touching the changes that would be visible at home after nine months' absence, three at school, and six in visits : it seemed half a lifetime in spite of affectionate regrets for her kind London friends, she could not but hope never to be away so long again. A movement on the part of her opposite neighbour recalled her thoughts to passing events, and she recollected that in such a journey as this, it was perfectly natural that some adventure should befall her, so she resolved to study all her fellow travellers without delay.

There was very little promise in the two faces immediately before her: the lady, who appeared between forty and fifty, was handsomely dressed, but harsh featured: she sat rather stiffly upright, which Julia thought a bad sign, and her cold, steady eye, looked like a sentinel on perpetual duty. The gentleman by her side was more aristocratic in appearance: grey haired, with small impatient eyes, glancing on all sides at once; thin drawn lips, and stern forehead, wrinkled before its time with incessant frowns. He was all the first part of the journey examining a memorandum book of red morocco; taking notes with a gold pencil, referring to letters, and never quiet for an instant. As the train went on, and the heat grew oppressive, he grew more restless than ever: and conversation began between him and his companion, if that could be called such, which consisted of grumbling on his side, and smooth assent on hers. Nothing in the existing state of society seemed right, and Julia, listening eagerly to find out who and what he was, found her penetration completely at fault. His bitter tirade against railways in general, made her first conjecture him to be either a persecuted shareholder, or a proprietor of stage coaches: his continual fidgetting with his pencil and notebook, savoured strongly of the author, only he was too well dressed: he could not be the lady's husband, because with all his irritation, he never found fault with *her*: perhaps he was a wit preparing impromptus, or a member of parliament rehearsing a speech, or a rich uncle, driven to misanthropy by the zeal of nephews and nieces; half a dozen characters had Julia given him in as many stations, while he grew more and more restless: jerking the windows up because of the dust, and down again be-

cause of the heat; complaining of the east wind, the flies, the steam, the arrangement of the carriages, the government, the directors, and the headache. This last seemed to absorb every other grievance, and like one who had found a long sought treasure, he suddenly exclaimed; "I know now why it is so, those vile hot rooms last night, Beatrice! nothing would satisfy you but you must go, and now I am the sufferer! it is dreadful, this headache of mine. Have you a salts bottle?"

The young lady thus addressed had sat quietly by Julia's side reading from the moment the train moved on, and she had not yet observed her features. Now she looked hurriedly up in answer to this apostrophe, and Julia turning half round, almost started at what she saw. It was just such a face as she had loved to dream of: a whole romance might be read in its lines; in the large, soft, liquid dark eyes—the pale, oval cheek—the delicate nose—the melancholy sweetness of the mouth—forming a countenance of such exquisite beauty as soon set our traveller's imaginative little brain on fire with interest and admiration. For deeply read in the pages of Scott and Hemans, and with an enthusiastic temperament of only seventeen years' experience, beauty and pensive grace and the name of Beatrice were quite sufficient to form a heroine in Julia's eyes, and she felt immediately an intense desire to make her intimate acquaintance. She watched and listened: the young lady appeared flurried, searched for salts, but found none; only a gold vinaigrette: that would not do; and she was sharply reproved for not having the article required. The headache grew no better; he was sure he smelt flowers: had she any about her? she had a sprig of myrtle in her bosom: that was quite

enough—she knew how ill it made him: she must throw it away instantly. While she was hastily unfastening it from her brooch, Julia, who felt quite provoked at any one being made ill by myrtle, summoned resolution to suggest her own bouquet of lilies and pinks might be in fault, and though gathered expressly for her refreshment from a favourite green house, she would willingly relinquish it, if it caused inconvenience. And suiting the action to the word, she threw it out of the window just as the train stopped at a station, and had the pleasure of seeing it flourish up and down the platform in the button hole of a ticket-keeper. The irritable gentleman could not but relax and bow in return for this civility; the beautiful Beatrice turned to her with a sweet smile of gratitude that lit up her pale quiet features like a glancing sunbeam; and as instantly faded away again on a remark from the lady opposite, that it would be a good thing if *she* were as considerate towards her dear father, as their courteous fellow traveller had shown herself. On this hint the father renewed his battery of complaints, on a variety of subjects, of course well understood by themselves, but most annoying to Julia Seymour. The least attempt at reply or defence on the part of her lovely neighbour, was commented upon by the elder lady as showing temper; and she soon gave up the contest, and sat in unmoved silence, till Julia began to hope the noise of the engine had for once proved a blessing, and drowned a harsher discord than its own. Unaccustomed herself to such domestic scenes, it was all she could do to sit and listen; what could be the matter with them? who could they be? was that sarcastic looking lady with the forbidding nose and hard eye, mother to the delicate beauty by

her side? *mother!* she thought of her own, and the very idea seemed profanation; no mother would have encouraged an unreasonable man to be out of temper with his daughter about nothing. "Oh, if mamma were but here!" thought Julia, "she would put him in good humour in five minutes; or if that was morally impossible, she would make him ashamed of himself, which would do just as well. How should I ever endure such treatment without flying into frantic rebellion? I am afraid this sweet-looking creature is either very tame spirited or very dull of feeling, to take it so quietly; though perhaps it is all patience and resignation, which, as I never could put them in practice, I am in duty bound to admire."

The train now stopped at a refreshment station, and the gentleman, recognizing an acquaintance on the platform, rose to alight, proposing the same measure to his companions. The elder lady accepted, the younger declined. "Temper still, my dear?" said the former in an audible whisper, "take my advice and try and conquer it—you had much better." The young lady only smiled in reply, but not as she had smiled at Julia; it was a peculiar smile, not easily forgotten, with more of sadness than a sigh, and more of gloom than a frown. The moment it caught her father's eye, his own brow darkened, and he turned from her to Julia, gravely proffering his services. She thanked him, but preferred retaining her seat, and the chance of a tête à tête with her interesting fellow traveller. A few trifling observations having passed between them, they gradually fell into more notable discourse, for Julia was bent on drawing out her new acquaintance, that she might see whether her mind was in unison with the poetic beauty of her person. It was

not enough to discuss the Royal Academy and the Botanical fêtes; of much less importance was it that she should be able to decide between Maclise and Eastlake, or the Regent's Park and Chiswick, than that her tastes should be refined, and her nature romantic. That she was a lover of reading was evident; she ventured to ask the nature of the work in her hand. It was a volume of selections, which Beatrice at once offered for her inspection, observing it was a pleasant travelling companion; useful either to create thoughts, or to drive them away. Julia asked for which of the two purposes reading was intended? "I used to think the former," replied her unknown companion, "but I have rather changed my views of late. I believe, in the present age, you have only to persevere in reading, as steadily as authors do in writing, and you may become a proficient in five or six different systems of belief; all equally plausible, and all at enmity with each other. Books are as unsatisfying in performance as they are rich in promise. "All but one book, then," said Julia, startled by a doctrine so opposed to her own disposition, for she was of that happy class of uncriticising readers, whose hand Sterne would have walked fifty miles to kiss, "there is fulness of truth in the Bible."

"There is," said Beatrice, "but one does not always feel it. There are cases, where the hearing is too diseased not to feel a painful jar at the most harmonious sound." "A very uncomfortable state of mind," said Julia, "I cannot say I ever felt it." The fair stranger turned her face towards her, and Julia could not help blushing beneath the scrutiny of those soft beautiful eyes, dark and deep as a mountain lake. "No," she said, after a thoughtful pause, "you do not look as if you had."

"Is my face such an index," said Julia, smiling and

feeling that at this rate they should soon become intimate, "it is trying to be so scrutinized; what do you see there?"

"I see, or think I see a happy nature, undimmed by doubt, or sorrow, or illness; as light of heart as of step, your lot must be an enviable one."

"Well, so it is," said Julia, "I own I am highly favoured altogether; I am going to the dearest of dear homes, full of those who love me; but then I have just left good friends; so I deserve a little pity too. Now it is my turn to examine," and she looked laughingly in her companion's face, who seemed disposed to shrink from the ordeal, "let me see if I can boast equal penetration with yourself, and then if we never see each other again, you may at least not carry away an overweening sense of superiority. I think I can see you are disposed to look on the worse side of things—in yourself as well as other people; that you have annoyances and trials that you do not deserve, and feel a great deal that you do not choose to show."

A shadow rose from the dark eyes of the fair stranger, like a mist from a deep valley, and spread over her pale features a gloom that showed some hidden painful chord had been struck. She gathered her shawl round her and sat back in her division of the carriage, and Julia felt for the hundredth time, that it would be much better if her heedless tongue was more careful of its expressions. She looked penitently under her fellow traveller's bonnet. "Do not think me rude or impertinent; I assure you, I did not mean to be so, you must not suppose I always talk to strangers in this way; it was yourself who first made the conversation personal."

"I acknowledge it, and I beg your pardon for even ap-

pearing to misunderstand you," returned Beatrice, recovering herself, "so amiable as you look, and as you have shown yourself to-day. I have not yet sufficiently thanked you for sacrificing your bouquet, doubtless a parting gift from the friends you are so sorry to leave."

"Oh, never mind the bouquet," said Julia, cheerfully, "our friendship is not dependent on any thing so frail. I do not mean to be impertinent again, but I would have thrown everything I had about me out of the window, sooner than go on hearing —" She stopped, notwithstanding her preface, feeling it was scarcely civil to comment on her father's ill temper; but except a faint return of the dark smile, the hint produced no effect. She seemed only inclined to notice the first part of the sentence. "You believe then in the existence of real faithful friendship?"

"Believe? yes, of course I do. What would life be without it?" said Julia, warmly.

"What it is now," said Beatrice, "only without its dreams."

"Then you think there are no true friends in the world?" cried Julia,—"*you*, who must have so many?"

"Perhaps for that very reason: but I did not allude to myself in particular. Mine are much like others. What I said of books, will apply equally to friends."

"And so will my protest," said Julia Seymour, reverently, "we have one perfect Friend, as well as one perfect book: only we are too apt to neglect both."

"Not only to neglect," said Beatrice, and a deeper tone of sadness was in her voice, "but to *lose*, and to spend the rest of life in seeking for in vain."

Before Julia could answer, the signal bell was rung,

and the passengers began to hurry to and fro, gazing wildly into the carriages, in agonies of terror lest they should miss their own, and be left at the station: the sport of stokers, and a warning to trains yet to come. Beatrice's companions soon made their appearance, and her father's acquaintance parting with them at the door, wished "his lordship" a good journey. And now the clamour of the engine re-commencing, without any one seeming disposed for more conversation; Julia leaned back in the carriage, her eyes fixed vacantly on the prospect, and her mind full of what she had just heard and observed.

She had never before seen any one who so completely equalled her ideal; neither day-dream, nor picture, nor description had shown her a more perfect form: how grievously tantalizing it was to think the bright vision must so soon pass away. That soft voice, with its under current of thoughtful sorrow,

"Sorrow more beautiful than beauty's self."

How it would echo in her ears, and fill her with vain longing to hear it once more!—If she could only know more about her — engage her confidence — prove to her that there *was* real friendship in the world — champion her under persecution—sympathize with her in trouble—oh! how glad she would be. "But it is no use," thought Julia, sighing, "in a little while we shall separate; she will go one way, and I another, and never perhaps, shall I see her face again!"

"Myrton! Myrton!" chanted the guard, as the train stopped at Julia's destination, and he marched down the platform, unfastening the doors. His lordship, who had

remained so quiet, Julia was sure he had been asleep, started up, declaring he had no idea they were there already: and was about to alight, when he missed the little morocco book in which he had been writing at the commencement of his journey. His excitement became excessive: for the train would only wait a few minutes: he tossed over the parcels, shook the pockets, and almost stamped with rage at the fruitlessness of his search. A porter, a policeman, Julia's maid, and his daughter's all came to help, and all helping at once, of course, found nothing: the ladies were questioned, but no one could give information: Mrs. Hargrave, the elder one, indeed suggested that Beatrice might have taken it up inadvertently during their stay at the refreshment station: he seized on the notion with avidity, and though the young lady denied having even observed it, she could not succeed in convincing him of her innocence.

All the time the search was going on, his low murmurs of wrath were breathing into her ear; and Julia, who had remained seated during the commotion, to the utter oblivion of her own fate, could scarcely refrain from interfering. Her eyes met those of Beatrice, as she stood submissively listening to reproach and denunciation: and she was still absorbed in the indignant sympathy she had no means of showing, when a bright face came pushing through the crowd, and recalled other ideas. "Julia! Julia! oh! there you are: come, be alive, and get out, or you will be carried on to the world's end. Never mind your traps: I'll take care of them," and her brother, the Harrovian, received her in his arms. "All well at home, dear Harry?" "Well? yes, to be sure—all right. Marshall will take care of your baggage, and I have the pony-

carriage for you. Got everything? parasol, basket, books, great bag under the seat—what a lot of things to be sure! well, come along."

Even in the bustle of arriving, and the joy of seeing Harry, Julia could not help looking back for her beautiful fellow traveller. She caught one more glimpse of her, stepping with Mrs. Hargrave into a handsome carriage; while her father was speaking to one of the superintendents, doubtless, thought Julia, about that tiresome memorandum book, that had already given so much more trouble than it was worth: they were evidently residents in the neighbourhood; and how could she find out their names and whereabout? and so busy was she with these surmises, as nearly to lose a portmanteau for want of claiming. Marshall, however, secured everything, and Harry hurried her to the pony-carriage, just as the coroneted vehicle rolled away.

"What are you thinking of, Julia? you look half asleep: come, you had time enough for that on the road; wake up, I want to talk to you. Never mind Lord Eustace's carriage: I would not change old Flip for either of his long tailed greys."

"Lord Eustace?" said Julia, starting at the name she knew so well, "what? our neighbour at the Hall? I wish I had known that before: why, I came in the same carriage with him, and his daughter; did not you see them?"

"Not I," said Harry, "I had somebody else to look after. You are rather behind your time, and their carriage had been waiting here half an hour."

"Are they going to live at the Hall, do you know?"

"I suppose so: there have been preparations going on

for a long while, they tell me: Lord Eustace came down some weeks ago, and told papa he was coming to reside. Never mind them now; look at Flip: is not he in good condition? I trotted him yesterday against Mr. Revis's Ranger—(you've not seen Mr. Revis yet: he has *such* a horse!) well, do you know Flip kept up with him from our gate to the mill, and I do believe would have passed him, but he pulled up to talk to some old woman with a pain in her thumb, or something."

"Really?" said Julia, glancing up the road at the receding carriage, "he is a dear good pony: could he not go a little faster?"

"Faster than you would like, but not on these hard roads," said Harry, looking very prudent and considerate. "You ladies are never to be trusted with the whip: you have no mercy on a horse's legs."

"Yes, yes, I have: only I had a particular reason — did you not get one peep at Miss Eustace when she got out, Harry?"

"No: I saw one ugly old woman, and that was quite enough for me."

"Yes, but you saw the wrong one:" and Julia began describing their journey, and dilated on the young lady's beauty and elegance, till Harry waxed chivalrous, and forgot the roads were hard. "I declare, if she is so pretty, I will get a sight of her somehow. We'll soon catch those greys: come, Flip! do credit to your training!"

The petted pony answered the appeal, enforced as it was by a smart touch of the whip, and brought them alongside of the aristocratic vehicle, as it was moving slowly up hill. Lord Eustace recognizing young Sey-

mour, bade his coachman stop: civilities were exchanged: Sir John and Lady Seymour asked after: pleasure expressed at having had Miss Seymour's society all the way from town, and a hope, seconded by a sweet smile from the fair Beatrice, of soon, and frequently meeting: and then the roads divided, bearing the one party to the baronial magnificence of Eustace Hall, and the other to the village of Eastbury, and a bright welcome home.

"What a splendid creature to be sure!" said Harry, "I had half a mind to come to town to fetch you, and if I had only known what company you were to have, it wouldn't have been distance that would have kept me!"

Home, sweet home! as the old song says, which is never likely to be quite forgotten: there is no place like home, and no delight like its warm, fond welcome. The welcome of those who have never flattered; who would not think it worth while to appear pleased if they did not feel so; who intend you no particular personal compliment, but rejoice because you are part of their joy, and that your coming makes the general happiness complete —how sweet and cheering it is! Julia felt its charm, the moment she entered her native parish: there was beauty in every familiar face that grinned or nodded welcome whether young or old, wrinkled or rosy; there was music in every familiar sound whether of bird or beast, or machine, or human voice; old Joe Brown's creaking cart, and the ringing of the blacksmith's hammer, and the barking of dogs, and the cawing of rooks: all were pleasant witnesses to the fact that she was once more at home, the place she loved best. Her spirits grew almost beyond her control; she clapped her hands, laughed, cried, and was nearly jumping out two or three times,

much to the indignation of Harry. "There's Mr. Lloyd! dear old Mr. Lloyd! now Harry, I must speak to him! only one minute—there, he sees us, so you must stop."

"We shall never get home, I see that," grumbled the Harrovian, "but I suppose you must be indulged as it is your first day. Well Sir!" he cried to an old white-haired gentleman, who stood in the middle of the road with his stick flourished over his head, and a thousand welcomes sparkling in his face. "I have brought the runaway back, you see." Mr. Lloyd nodded—he could not speak at first, but he leaned his arms on the side of the little carriage, and squeezed Julia's hand in both his, with an energy that almost gave her the cramp. "So you are come back at last," he said, when he recovered his voice—"well, that's right: I am very glad to see you, my dear; and so will Lizzy be: she's in doors just now, but she'll come and see you to-morrow, I'll be bound. Well, God bless you—I won't keep you now—I'm thankful to see your bright face again; the place is never the same without you. Well, I won't detain you, Harry, the papa and mamma are on the look out, I know:—I wont keep you from them."

But he did keep them, nevertheless, while he asked fifty questions about Julia's health, and her friends in town, and the last news, and how the corn looked as she passed through the country. "By the bye, Harry Seymour, we have had Mr. *Greatheart* here just now, looking at the parish fire-engine, and a pretty state of mind was he in, when it turned out to be just good for nothing. It's a great shame and that is the truth, but nobody had thought of it before, and a man is to come over from

Myrton to-morrow to put it in repair. It is well he thought of looking, or we might all be burnt in our beds."

"Who is Mr. Greatheart?" asked Julia.

"Our new parson, my dear, Mr. Revis.—I forgot you never saw him: the Rector who succeeded poor old Mr. Chambers:—ah, he died just after you left. Lizzy gave him the name of Greatheart, and it will stick to him through life, I fancy: for he is fighting with giants every day, of some sort or other."

"Are you sure they are not wind-mills?" asked Julia.

The old gentleman laughed.—"That will just do for Lizzy; she always laughs more at your jokes, than anybody else's. She is in a sad fright to-day, because the engine has been meddled with; she is sure there will be a fire to-night. Well, I won't keep you, for Harry looks as if he wanted his dinner—good bye!"

"I am glad my face is so expressive," said Harry, as they drove on, "and we are fortunate that Miss Lloyd was not there to help her brother. They are very worthy people, no doubt—but—" "But you cannot appreciate them," interrupted Julia, good humouredly, "that is your misfortune, Harry. I am not to be laughed or grumbled out of my love for my dear old friends, so don't waste your time in trying." Harry shrugged his shoulders, and on they went—past the mill,—past the pond, round by the church hill,—up to a certain grey gate that had so often haunted Julia's London dreams—and there was a merry little face looking through it, and a joyous hurrah as it swung heavily back, and Flip dashed in, along the drive, through the beautiful lime trees, loaded with fragrance, and musical with bees, up to the old hall door, where stood the dear smiling mother, and a host of

bright faces on every side of her;—and Julia, tossing away shawls and parcels, was among them in a moment. What shouts of joy from all the children—what strong, silent presses to her mother's bosom—what bows and smiles from the servants—what wild barkings from congratulating dogs! Is there any joy on earth like this? is there any love so sweet—any welcome so true and kind? Out upon the hearts that prize it not; or upon the ingratitude that sins it away; or the indifference that chills its fire; or the rapacity that exhausts its love!

"Has everything come safely, Harry?"

"I believe so, mother—Marshall is following;—no thanks to the young lady's head, though, for she was all astray like a lost duck. Here, somebody! come and catch hold of these things! here are half a hundred thimbles and pincushions, rolling all about the carriage."

Several assistants hastened to the rescue of Julia's little presents, which had escaped in the fall of her basket; and shouts of "what's this?" and "what's that?" became so perplexing, she found it expedient to distribute them at once, and enter the house on a pavement of golden opinions. At the drawing-room she was met by the butler, a short, somewhat corpulent personage, of overwhelming erudition, and oppressive delivery, who in the most deliberate voice thus addressed her: "I beg most respectfully to offer my congratulations, Miss Seymour, on the auspicious event of your safe return to the paternal and maternal roof; and hope you will have the goodness to pardon the liberty I take in offering, in my own name, and those of my fellow-servants, our most sincere and respectful wishes for your health and happiness."

"Thank you, Gotham, and the same to you all," said

Julia, well accustomed to his habits of speech-making; and struggling to restrain her risible organs into the proper smile of pleased acknowledgment. It is doubtful whether she would have succeeded if she had not taken refuge in the drawing-room, into the arms of her dear grandmamma. Sir John Seymour was the last to give his welcome, having been engaged on important business, but he hurried it over as dexterously as he could, and came briskly in before Julia had half done kissing her grandmamma. Never came daughter to a more indulgent home, where every one vied in admiration and approval: pleased with what she brought, satisfied with what she had done, eager to know she had been happy, rejoiced that she was come back at last. Dinner cut the congratulating short, and while that important meal is discussed, we must begin considering who were the various members that made up the happy family circle. There was Sir John, the father, warm-hearted, generous, and sincere; somewhat heedless, somewhat indolent, somewhat loving good cheer and good wine; a sportsman, and a magistrate, yet friendly to all his neighbours, and merciful to petty trespassing: stout, strong, fresh-coloured, in continual fear of growing too large, yet never taking any effectual means to prevent the evil; rather addicted to making bad puns, and to considering fox-hunting the chief end of existence: beloved even by those who saw his faults, and in his own circle every one's indulgent and sympathising friend. In religion—what character can be pourtrayed, where that moving principle is unnoticed? yet of this class of persons what shall we say? He reverenced all that was good; he paid it every outward respect; yet can we reconcile true religion with conformity to the

world, or the self denying of the believer with continual self-indulgence? Here it is that truth becomes grievous: less pain is it to draw the dark shades of the hardened, than to throw dimness on the glow of the almost Christian. Yet the truth must be spoken: that during the long period of drowsy ministrations inflicted on the parish through the infirmities of the late incumbent, church going and Bible reading had been less attended to than they should have been; and less profited by than they might: a sleepy habit of listening had at first been excused—then justified: and it was no slight proof of the new rector's eloquence that he was able to keep him awake through two sermons every Sunday. In short, he was one of those in whom we see so much good, that we cannot help grieving there is no more. Of his wife, handsome, active, and clever, earnest in duty, and buoyant in temper, there is but one thing to be said objectionable; which is, that her keen abhorrence of everything like hypocrisy or pretence, made her somewhat uncharitable in her judgments, and unguarded in her sarcasm. Whether she had ever herself been grossly deceived by professors of religion, or whether her prejudices had been fostered by narrow-minded writings, certain it was that her love for the reality was often veiled by her bitterness against the counterfeit, and many a trembling beginner, whom she might have helped on his way, was induced to hide his convictions for fear of being suspected of assuming them. Very different was the disposition of Lady Lovel, her mother: in whose benignant face the struggler might read sympathy, and the penitent might look for comfort. Hers was the true religion of long and early growth, which, cherished and watered year after year, had taken

root too deeply and spread too widely, to leave room for the weeds of uncharitableness and satire. The suns and shadows of a long and chequered life had left many a line on her placid brow: but they were all as things gone by; she was near her rest, and she knew it; and the light of the city on whose borders she was waiting, was reflected in the serenity of her smile. Feeble were her steps, and dim her eye; her hand had well nigh lost its cunning, and her voice was low and tremulous; but her work had been done in her hour of strength, and her weakness gave her now no trouble. Her hoary head was indeed a crown of glory, and every one acknowledged its sway: there was not a house in the neighbourhood, from the highest to the lowest, that did not esteem itself honoured by her acceptance of any services they could render.

And Julia, our little friend Julia—for little she was though seventeen, with a slight elastic form, delicate in shape, and graceful in action, and a well-shaped head full of wit, and a bright face full of laughter, and an ardent enquiring mind, and a yearning after the beautiful and ideal, and a fearlessness almost bordering on audacity, and a temper that nothing could make miserable—wild mixture of spirited materials—how stood it between her soul and God? What was the emotion swelling in her breast, as she stood for a brief space alone at her chamber window, and looked once more on the peaceful village landscape, associated with all her best and earliest thoughts; and heard the church clock, borne along on the breeze, from childhood one of her favourite sounds? Words would have been insufficient to speak the language of that moment, but her heart had a tongue of its own; and the prayer and the praise it poured forth then went up to the

heavens as incense. Trouble had never visited, hope had never disappointed her; her religion was more that of joy and gratitude, than of practice and self-denial; her thoughts dwelt on holy things for their beauty and sweetness; and on her God for the bounties he had bestowed. Hers was that period of bright visioning, when even faith takes the hues of poetry, when it seems an easy and a glorious thing to tread the path of eternal life, and sink to sleep in the hope of a heavenly waking. Blessed dreams of fearless youth—who will presume to scoff at such as these, whereby the young Christian is led onward before he is aware, and gradually strengthened for the sterner toils that maturer life brings on? Blessed, if they end not in dreaming; if before the gay hues fade, and the warm imagination chill among the disappointments of progression, the soul has laid firmer hold on the reality of spiritual being, and gone on from strength to strength, in the lifelong struggle with sin and with itself!

Besides Julia and Harry, there were three younger members of the family, but touching their distinct characteristics, deponent sayeth nothing: except that if what every body says is true, they must have been a charming race, for from their grandmamma downwards, all declared there never were such children. Such were the inmates of Julia's home; not forgetting a strong muster of servants, and above all, Mr. Gotham, the butler, renowned for his flow of long syllables, and his references, in season, and out of season, to his late master the doctor; and a collection of pets, of which Flip was by no means the least important. The house itself was of greystone, roomy, square, and full of comfort. The furniture was handsome, but all adapted for use; you met with no stiff, drome-

daries of chairs, made for anything but to be sat upon; or hard, repulsive sofas, that mocked the aches they professed to relieve; or gorgeous footstools the fingers were forbidden to touch; or tables that nothing might stand on, except highly gilt albums and books of beauty, too beautiful to be looked at: nothing of that sort would suit Lady Seymour, who was a vigorous utilitarian, and would no more suffer uselessness in furniture than idleness in daughters. Her rooms were paradises of comfort—full of contrivances for accommodation and temptations to lounge and stretch, and give way to the laziness, which her watchful eye was ever ready to prevent. In consideration of her journey, however, Julia was encouraged in the evening, to repose in the most luxurious of armchairs, placed near the open window, that she might enjoy the smell of the flowers, of which she had been deprived so long; while Lady Seymour made tea, and the children kept up a brisk fire of questions. "Did you go to the Zoological Gardens, Julia, and see the giraffes, and the ourang outang? and did it drink tea like an old woman? and did you ride on the elephant's back, like the people in the book? and did you go to the Tower, and St. Paul's, and Westminster Abbey, and the House of Lords, and the wax-work? and oh, Julia, did you see Whitehall, and the window where King Charles came out to be beheaded? and did you often see the Queen, and is she like *all* her pictures; and are not the London shops very beautiful, and which of all the places you went to, did you like the best?"

Julia, thus pressed, answered as many questions as she could manage, to satisfy all parties: she had been to the Zoological Gardens, but found it very tiring and very hot, and confessed the animals were not very pleasant com-

pany in warm weather; the giraffes were like their portraits in general, and so was her majesty; the ourang outang certainly drank tea like an old woman, better than some old women, perhaps. "Take care, my love," said Lady Lovel, gravely, "I am not so deaf as you may think."

"Dearest grandmamma! when you know how mamma always holds you up to us as a pattern of all that a lady ought to be!"

"I am afraid grandmamma wants a compliment," said Sir John, as he handed her cup; "she knows pretty well what we all think. Go on, Julia, go on."

"Yes, do go on—tell us more," cried Charles and Eleanor; in obedience to which, Julia proceeded to relate how she did not ride the elephant, and did not go to the Tower or St. Paul's; but to Westminster Abbey she had been several times, and once to the House of Lords, when the queen opened Parliament, and she had passed the Banqueting House in going down Whitehall, but had never visited the interior: and she was gradually warming in her descriptions and lengthening her accounts as the interest of her audience increased, when she was interrupted by the entrance of Gotham. The perspiration was standing on his forehead, and his face was almost purple; but without any other signs of agitation, he advanced to the middle of the room, and bowed with pendant arms. "If you please, Sir John, if you please, my lady." He stopped for a moment to take breath, then seeing all eyes fixed upon him in surprise, continued with his usual deliberation. "I thought it my duty, Sir John, to intrude for an instant in order to communicate to you and my lady what has come under my observation within the last

few moments. It will not, I trust, prove of any very alarming or detrimental consequence—nevertheless . . ."

"Nevertheless!" interrupted his master, "why won't you say at once what you have to say, without hunting for all the long words in the dictionary; out with it, what's the matter? the grey kicked any one again?" "No, Sir John," replied Gotham, as calmly as before, "I am rejoiced to affirm that no misdemeanour on the part of that animal has come under my notice of late, owing, it may be, to the circumstance of my duties lying elsewhere. The event to which I would direct your attention—I beg I may not cause any needless alarm—is the discovery I have made of a—I hope I may say—slight *conflagration.*" "WHAT?" roared Sir John. "Do you mean to say there is a fire?" cried Lady Seymour; and every one started up. "Where, Gotham, where?" Sir John had already rushed out of the room, and Lady Seymour was darting after him, when Gotham stopped her. "I beg your pardon, my lady, but the conflagration is not in the house. "Where then? in the stable? or the rick-yard? speak, man, quick! "In the village, my lady," stammered poor Gotham, choking with the attempt to hurry out the words: his mistress broke from him without further parley, and every one dispersed to get a sight of the scene of disaster. Sir John and Harry calling all the men servants with tubs and buckets about them, hastened out to give what help they might; Lady Lovel with her little grandchildren clinging to her skirts, stood at the nursery window, which commanded a view of the village: Lady Seymour flew to the kitchen, to give orders for the relief of the sufferers, and unobserved by any one, Julia stole through the garden, and across the meadow till she

reached a favourite bank, where she knew she could have the best view of the fire.

It was a terrible spectacle that met her eyes; a group of thatched cottages in the turn of the road all blazing at once, against the glowing twilight sky, the flames roaring, and the showers of sparks flying in every direction, and a crowd of people running distractedly hither and thither, some screaming, some wringing their hands—no one knowing what to do. Not an attempt was made to check the raging flames, and the destruction of the neighbouring farm-house and ricks seemed inevitable. Julia could have cried with terror and distress, for she remembered what Mr. Lloyd had said, respecting the inutility of the engine, when a shout from the people, ringing above the roar of the fire, announced the arrival of somebody on horseback, in whom every one seemed to have confidence. This welcome individual was Mr. Revis, the young rector, who happening to return from a ride, just as the flames were rising highest, came up on the gallop. He sprung to the ground, in an instant, calling out to Sir John and Harry who appeared at the same time. "Never mind the engine, gentlemen, it's useless; don't lose time; jump on my horse, Harry Seymour, and gallop to Myrton for their engines—the clerk's house is the second as you enter the town. Away with you, for your life; tell him Mr. Revis sent you!" Harry needed no second bidding; he seized the rector's whip, leaped on the back of the steed he so much admired, and dashed off at a pace rather calculated to astonish the worshipful town and corporation of Myrton. "Now, Sir John," continued Mr. Revis, to whom everybody turned for orders, "form your men in a double line from the pond—pass the tubs and buckets from hand

to hand—be alive, men—all hands, help—cheerily now, and never fear! keep them at it, Sir John; and please God, we'll manage it yet. Now then, lads, Lee, Simpson, Walker, who will follow me?" And waving his hand with a cheer, he burst into the thickest of the flames. "Oh God, protect him!" shrieked Julia. "Away, away, men!" shouted Sir John, working like a coal-heaver himself, and lifting ponderous tubs in the strength of excitement as if they were so many thimbles: "throw it in after him—send the empty buckets back—quick!"

The men dashed the water on the spot where their favourite had disappeared, with all the energy of anxious affection: a cloud of suffocating smoke burst in their faces, and through it came Lionel Revis, with his hair on fire, and an old invalid in his arms. Water was thrown over them both; and several hands attempted to detain the Rector from farther efforts, but he shook them off indignantly. "What have you been about, men? there are *children* in those houses—*children!* think of your own!" And amid a wild shriek from the spectators he dashed into the largest of the cottages: four men followed him—all were driven back by the flames. "Pour away! pour away!" thundered Sir John, who had not ceased his exertions for a moment: "pour away, or he'll never come out alive!" The men needed no stimulus: they worked like giants; the buckets flew from hand to hand; the hissing stream was kept up unceasingly, and to these efforts Lionel Revis probably owed his life; for never was man in more awful peril. But active and impetuous as a young lion, and half maddened with excitement and daring, he burst through blazing rafters and falling thatch, and caught two babes in his arms,

just as the floor was giving way. He sprung with them to the window—it was fast; he held them in one arm, as babies had never been held before, and dashed the other through the panes: he would have dashed his head in if no other way had offered. The draught of air gave fresh fury to the flames, and the suffocation and heat at that moment had well nigh finished the career of the young pastor of Eastbury; but several strong arms, Sir John's among them, hurled in a volume of water, and then planted a ladder against the wall. The cottage, though one of the largest, was of no great height; but the blazing of the thatch made the scaling a work of danger. However, the Baronet scrambled up first, and received one baby in his arms, and all reached the ground safely, amid a general burst of applause. "All the lives are safe now, I think," gasped Lionel Revis, as soon as he had breath enough to speak.

"All but your own," said Sir John, "if you make any more such attempts. But here come the engines—hurrah! Clear away, men, we shall do well now. Here, somebody catch hold of this youngster;" popping it into the hands of the nearest bystander; and then shaking his own, repeating "I never was born to be a good nurse."

"Please, Sir John!" cried the man, who was the Rectory servant, and no ways delighted with the charge, "what am I to do with it, Sir John?"

"Take it out of the way, and yourself too," was the reply, as the Baronet rushed forward to assist in bringing up the long looked for engines. "Take it to that lady on the bank, Joseph," cried his master, "and then follow me, I hear another cry for help;" and again he forced his way into the flames, from which he had so marvellously

escaped. "Follow you? Hey! that's easily said," muttered Joseph, as he clambered up the bank according to orders, and put his wet, wailing burden into Julia's astonished arms. "What is this? what am I to do with it?"

"It is a baby, ma'am; my master told me to bring it to you. We don't know what to do with it ourselves; and there is another about somewhere."

"Poor little thing!" said Julia, handling it as tenderly as her inexperience would admit, "where are its parents?"

"The mother's out charring, I believe; the father works down at the foundry. I hope you're quite well, Miss Seymour."

"Is that Joseph Mayflower?" said Julia, starting.

"Yes, ma'am, it is Joseph at present; it will be a cinder heap presently, I dare say."

"Oh Joseph, what a terrible scene! What are you going to do?"

"Hey! you may well ask," said Joseph, slipping down the bank again without ceremony, and disappearing among the agitated throng.

The engines were now directed on those two houses nearest the farm buildings, and the firemen worked indefatigably. And still where the danger was greatest, the Rector was foremost; and once Julia caught a sight of his face in the lurid glare of the fire light, terrible in the fierce excitement that dilated his eye and knit his brow, and set every muscle as if with iron; a vision of wild heroic energy, that might perhaps have detained her still longer at her watch, but for the piteous lamentation of the poor baby, she had till then forgotten, appealing to her heart for assistance and care. Reproaching herself for inhumanity, she ran back across the meadow at full speed,

grievously embarrassed with her saturated charge, whose legs and arms gradually recovering their powers, began to vibrate in all directions in unison with its voice. Julia shifted it every way she could think of, and hushed and soothed and remonstrated, but all to no purpose, and she was never more thankful than when she reached the house, where she sat panting on the step of the door. Her mother rushed to meet her. "You naughty girl! I have been in search of you everywhere, for I was sure you would be running into danger: what have you got there?"

"Please take it, mamma. I am afraid it is ill," said Julia. "Mr. Revis and papa saved it from burning, and Joseph Mayflower brought it to me, and it has not ceased crying for an instant. O mamma, what a sight I have seen!" "I have seen it too, my love: but there is no use in giving way to these feelings," said Lady Seymour, briskly: "give me the child, and come and see what can be done for it." It was taken accordingly to the housekeeper's room, and undressed; and then no wonder could be expressed at the poor little thing's fretting; for, besides being soaked with cold water, it had two burns on its little neck; telling their own tale of the peril from which its pastor's hand had snatched it. It was in good hands now, however: Lady Seymour was a skilful surgeon, and Lady Lovel as good a nurse, and it lay on the old lady's lap while the younger one dressed its hurts, and wrapped it in dry clothes; and in due time fell fast asleep there. Julia, finding herself useless, stole to the door for intelligence, as she was forbidden to go out; and returned with the good news that the fire was rapidly abating. In a few minutes, hearing voices in the passage, she ran out to learn their tidings, and found herself in the arms of

somebody who hugged, and kissed, and laughed, and cried over her, as if her touch communicated instant insanity of the most lively and extraordinary nature. But Julia, no ways disconcerted, returned the embrace with interest, for it was that of a friend whom she could never recollect not to have loved, who had petted and indulged her to a degree that required all the vigour of Lady Seymour's discipline to counteract: once the protegée of the family, then the confidential servant; always the zealous friend: and now wife to her cousin, Joseph Mayflower, and housekeeper to the Rev. Lionel Revis, of Eastbury Rectory ——shire: in person, stout, handsome, and bustling; in voice, quick and cheering; in tongue, nimble and vivacious; hasty of temper, and high of spirit: a devoted ally, and a most provoking enemy: by name Marian Mayflower, commonly called May.

"My dear, dear May!" said Julia, as soon as she had recovered her voice, "I thought you would soon come and see me; but I did not expect you just this minute. Is the fire put out?"

"Very nearly, my precious, very nearly: there is Mrs. Barnard standing looking at it now, and if she is not sufficient damp to put out a blaze, I don't know what is. What a pretty business to be sure, the first evening you come home, my darling; never say, we don't care for you, when we make such a bonfire at the expense of the parish. There's my good man in the middle of it, I believe: he's sure to be busy wherever there's mischief."

"So busy," said Julia, "that he brought me a poor little baby to take care of: there it is asleep now, but it was all I could do to bring it home."

"Yes, yes, I see," continued May, "one of Mrs. Plowden's twins, that Mr. Revis risked his life to save. Ay, it would have taken a great many of that family to make up his loss, and so I told 'em just now."

"I never saw such a desperate hero," said Julia, he seemed half mad with his exertions. I wonder you can live in the house with such a furious master."

"That shows how little you know of either of them, Julia," said Lady Seymour, who had approached to greet Marian: "it is the general saying in these parts, that Mr. Revis governs all the parish, and May governs Mr. Revis."

"To be sure;" said May, "do you suppose I could live with a master whom I could not manage? bless your heart, we should quarrel in a week: besides, if I did not keep his reverence in proper order, Joseph might begin to fancy *he* must have his own way, and a pretty thing that would be!"

"I wish they would all come back," said Lady Seymour, moving anxiously to the door, "there can be no occasion for everybody to stay now the danger is over."

"Bless your heart, my lady," said May, "did you ever know anything managed in this part of the world without all the fingers being in the pie? They are as busy talking now as if chatter would plaster up the walls again: besides, now all's over, Mr. Barnard is come to help, of course, and it will take some time to settle how much credit he's entitled to, for all the work Mr. Revis did without him."

Lady Seymour shook her head with a smile; and as she left the room, Julia asked for an explanation. "You will soon understand, dear," said May, laughing: "when

you were here last, Mr. Barnard had all the work to do by himself, his Rector being bedridden, and he did it just as he liked: and when Mr. Revis came, everybody supposed he would be turned out; but he came over my master, I don't know how, and he kept him on, and has had the pleasure of paying his salary and doing his work ever since."

"I hope you exaggerate, May."

"Hoping won't hurt you, my dear: I wish I did exaggerate. Why, it's pretty well known already, though Mr. Revis has only been here so short a time, that to get a thing done, a tap at the rector's window is worth a dozen knocks at the curate's door; for one does it in less time than the other takes in promising: and it is a great pity, for he is a good hearted man, and will do a kindness to any one who isn't in a hurry for it, and would do more, I dare say, if he had a different sort of wife. The very sound of Mrs. Barnard's clogs coming up the steps makes the cat mew; which shows more Christian sense in the beast than one would give her credit for. She's no drone in the hive, not she! If there is a thimbleful of honey to be got at the Rectory by buzzing, she'll carry it home: sometimes it's a basket of fruit she'll be good enough to gather, just to thin the trees, or just to tempt Miss Barnard's delicate appetite:—it is lucky for Miss Barnard if she gets the stones and parings: sometimes it will be a bouquet of Mr. Revis's favourite flowers, to set out her room when she expects company, to save them from blushing unseen, she says; it is better than not blushing at all, as I told her: or she'll take some peas, or beans, or salad, or cabbages; nothing comes amiss: and when there is nought to be had in the eating way,

it will be cuttings from geraniums she'll want, or she'll borrow spoons and table cloths, and everything he has got, but sermons. And he just lets her have what she chooses, that is the worst of it: if I was not there to look after things, she would not leave him a pen to write his Commentary with, that keeps him up half the night."

"I am very glad you are there, dear May;" said Julia, "and I hope, in spite of Mrs. Barnard, you are happy in the Rectory."

"Well, I am as happy as one can expect to be, with two men to manage. As for Joseph, he knows his place pretty well by this time, and he don't say much, that's a blessing: and Mr. Revis—well, I'll say nothing about him now, you shall find out what he is for yourself."

"There is mamma calling me," cried Julia, starting up; "and I hear all the men returning:—I shall see you presently, May?"

"Bless you, no, I must be off: my master will be filling his house with half roasted parishioners, I know, and they'll be for cooling their throats out of my larder. I'll just see after this poor little babe of Mrs. Plowden's, and go. Ah, Mrs. Plowden was working at Mrs. Barnard's, or she'd have been home to see to it herself:—she is always kept there two hours later than anywhere else, for less money, and worse food."

Miss Seymour found her mother on the lawn, with a number of gentlemen and villagers, all discussing the origin of the fire, and consulting on the best method of relieving the sufferers. Besides Sir John and Harry, there were old Mr. Lloyd, who having practised in his youth as a surgeon, was ready for action, with a case of instruments sticking out of one pocket, and some suspi-

cious looking article protruding from the other; Mr. Barnard the curate, a tall, grey, timid looking man, with a countenance of benevolent weakness; and Mrs. Barnard, his second wife, a substantial lady, with a restless, hungry eye, that looked perpetually on the watch for windfalls; farmer Gray, whose property had so narrowly escaped; old Simon the clerk, and Jerry the sexton, and Pounce the beadle, and a host of other village worthies, who though of indifferent value in the hour of action, were the best givers of advice imaginable when all was safely over. How the fire had arisen nobody could tell: still less how it came to pass that the parish engine, a gift from Lord Eustace's father, should have been so long neglected. On this point, however, Mr. Lloyd said but little, and Mr. Barnard less, and both seemed glad to turn the conversation on the gallant behaviour of their young rector, whose popularity, already considerable, had that evening reached its zenith. His strength, his nerve, his desperate bravery, his anxiety for the safety of his people, formed the theme of every tongue; and when Harry Seymour pointed across the lawn to his approaching figure, they involuntarily began to cheer. "That's right, that's right!" said Sir John, flourishing the handkerchief with which he was wiping his heated face, "give it him heartily, for he deserves it."

And so they did, till the rooks began to caw, and the dogs to bark, and the groups of loiterers about the road caught the sound, and echoed it back: and Lionel Revis, who had no idea he had done anything wonderful, quickened his pace to ask what all the uproar could be about?" "About," said Sir John, "how can you stand there looking so innocent, and pretending you don't understand that

we are hurrahing for you? Your gallantry has saved some half dozen lives to-night, and we should be brutes if we were not grateful. Give me your hand, sir; I am proud to be one of your parishioners." And he was on the point of seizing the Rector's right hand in both his, when the latter drew it hastily back. "The other hand, Sir John, is at your service," he said with a smile; "I am afraid this one is hardly in condition to return your greeting as it deserves." On being pressed for an explanation, he reluctantly showed his hand, the back of which was covered with fiery blisters, and was for muffling it in his handkerchief and hurrying off; but this Lady Seymour would not hear of, and old Mr. Lloyd, putting on his spectacles, and turning up his sleeves, looked all eagerness to fall to work immediately. It was no use his declaring he had a great deal to do, and a great many people to look after, and that he did not mind a little burn, and that it was nothing at all to signify; they pushed him into the house, and into an arm chair, and set about curing him there and then: and had the satisfaction of hearing him acknowledge, when his hand had been dressed and bandaged, that the relief was indescribable. "Now, my dear sir," said Lady Seymour, "you look very interesting indeed with your arm muffled up, but not half so much so as you will appear in a sling, which we will provide for you immediately. It is not of the least use for you to fret and fume, and say you will not be seen in such a thing, and so forth; wear it you must; and take care of your hand you must; and write your sermons as you can with your elbow. Run, Harry, and call May: she will manage it better than I shall."

"Is she here?" said Mr. Revis, starting up and pulling

his arm away from Mr. Lloyd, "I have been seeking her everywhere. The woman in whose service I got this burn is I fear sadly hurt, and was carried to the Rectory. Marian must go home at once, and so must I."

"So considerate!" said Mrs. Barnard, softly. He turned quickly round. "Mrs. Barnard! did you know of any person of the name of Wortley, lodging in the same house with Jacob Reynolds and Mrs. Plowden?"

Mrs. Barnard grew very red, "Yes, yes; I think I did hear something about such a person: I mentioned her to you, Mr. Barnard."

"Did you, my dear?"

"Yes, don't you remember? but I cannot wonder at your forgetting, with all you have to think of, poor man! Ah, Lady Seymour, you who have such a quiet happy life with your dear family, you would smile at the resources I am forced to adopt to help Mr. Barnard's memory; so much as he has to do!"

"My dear!" said Mr. Barnard, colouring.

"Well, my dear," repeated his lady, laughing, "how you look! you do not suppose I forget Mr. Revis is present, do you? I believe I can safely appeal to him to confirm what I say."

Julia, remembering what May had said, looked at Mr. Revis at this moment, to see if his countenance would bear testimony to the truth of her report; but could read nothing in his bow but politeness. His face however, told something more.

Lionel Revis, M. A. rector of Eastbury, and nephew to the Bishop of the diocese, young, ardent, and talented — of striking appearance, and fascinating address, occupied at this time a position in any profession perilous — in a

clergyman most of all. Admired, courted, almost worshipped, had he been in the different scenes of labour where his uncle had placed him: no standing room could be had where he preached; half a dozen proprietory chapels were offered him in the neighbourhood of London, with unlimited powers, and as many curates as he chose to ask for: in short, everything was done that man or woman could do, to turn the wisest head that ever composed a sermon. His uncle saw what was going on, and not willing to test too sorely the stability he had taken such pains to build, took him away from his worshippers in the height of his popularity, and planted him in a living, where as he had reason to believe, the neglect of accumulated years would so fill his hands with work, as to leave no time for his congregatión to spoil him.

It had been said of Lionel Revis as a youth, by one who knew character well, and his in particular, that he was formed either for immense good, or immense evil: and in every scene of his life, the accuracy of the judgment was manifest. He had all the qualities of a leader: self-reliance, boldness, fertility of resource, promptness in decision, energy in execution. As a school-boy he made half the establishment idle or industrious, according as he chose to set the example: as a collegian he was the idol of his friends, the glass wherein all the gowned youth did dress themselves, not always as successfully as they supposed; and to describe the number of young ladies who were ready to marry him, or the number of mammas who were ready to give them in marriage, would take up more space than we can afford to bestow. Wherever he went he took the lead, from the boy's cricket ground to he clerical convocation; not from any assumption or ve-

hemence on his part, but from the energy and talent and power over the minds of others which every year but developed in greater strength.

It was written on his deeply marked, intellectual features, in the vivid light of his eye, in the firm determination of his mouth and cheek, in the elastic springing step, that knew no weariness; in the spare, erect, sinewy frame, whose every muscle seemed strung with iron — written so that all who saw might read and acknowledge, that he was born to be a captain and a guide among men: one whom no difficulties could discourage, whom no exertion could tire; and who, whether for good or whether for evil, would ever carry multitudes along with him, either to enhance the terror of his doom, or to shine as jewels in his crown of rejoicing.

Such was Lionel Revis in person, in position, in attainments, as he appeared first to Julia Seymour's view; having just added to his former popular qualities the reputation of generous intrepidity and disregard of self;— no wonder that he was a hero in her eyes, much more than in his own. For with all his graceful address, and no bona fide hero ever had more, he was endued with a native simplicity of heart, that was his best protection against public applause. A sturdy honesty of motive, an impetuous desire to push straight forward, and work the work appointed him in the right way, and as fast as possible, kept his mind too fully occupied to attend to what was said around him: a noble enthusiasm, by nature implanted and fostered by education, for the great and the good who had trodden the pastoral road before him, kept him continually striving to apprehend, and banished self-seeking and vanity by constant and unsparing com-

parison. Others might worship him—he worshipped not himself; nor his preaching, eloquent as it was: nor his people, devoted as they seemed to be: but he loved his work, and his religion, and his Lord, with the simple, heartfelt love that is strong as death, and that rejected as treason to his Master the homage due to Him alone.

In this simplicity of intention, many things escaped his notice, whereby a more vigilant vanity might have been attracted. To it may be attributed in a great degree his indifference to the advances of the numerous candidates who had disputed for his hand and heart. With all his penetration and study of human nature, it never seemed to occur to him, good honest man, that *he* could be the object of any of his kind friends' manœuvering: the mothers who consulted him about their dear girls' education, and the daughters who asked his advice about their duty to their parents, always got it very plainly: spoken with the same uncompromising regard to truth as distinguished that doctrine to which his congregation listened with such riveted ears, and stricken consciences. And as to flattering letters, and well turned compliments, he put the former into the fire, and "shifted his trumpet" to the latter, heeding them no more than as reminders, to single out the self congratulating parties for an extra rebuke at the first opportunity.

But enough of description; his character must unfold itself in his actions: we have only given its broad outline: he had his thorns in the flesh, like others, and among them was that very energy that gave him so much of his influence. By nature it was wild and ungovernable; the excitability of his frame was like a fire in his bones; and the very restraint laid upon it, by his well-trained mind, but

added to its strength what it took away from its violence. Prayer and vigilance and incessant employment enabled him to keep it in control; but often would it wrestle for the mastery: and few who saw him in his school, amid stammered collects and mangled catechisms, the gentle teacher of the obstinate and the dull, were aware of the real suffering so often caused him by slowness and stupidity, and by laziness oftener still.

All this time there had been a hue and cry after Marian Mayflower, who was discovered at last in close consultation with poor Mrs. Plowden, the mother of the twins, who having seen one safely housed with a neighbour, had come in search of the other, full of grief for her losses, indignation on the cause, whatever it might be, and gratitude to Mr. Revis and Miss Seymour. Her master's summons recalled May to a sense of her duty, and she hastened to receive his commands with a degree of anxiety about his personal safety, which was not lessened by the request that she would arrange his sling for his right arm, but which she would not have acknowledged on any account. "Well, sir," she went on muttering all the while she was performing her office with the gentlest care, "we thought we'd seen the last of *you;* it's too bad that you shouldn't take care of yourself; however, you are tougher than we gave you credit for: and if you like grilling, why, every one to his taste. A nice state your coat is in, and as to your hair, the less we look at it the better. What could make you risk your life in scrambling for babies; just as if one hadn't babies enough in the world, and to spare!"

"Make haste, Marian," returned her master, quietly, "you are wanted at home, and we can hear the rest of your humane suggestions another time."

"And who wants me at home, sir? has Joseph burnt his fingers too?"

"No, no, do you think I would have kept you here if Joseph was not quite safe? but there is a poor woman who is much hurt, I fear, and must be looked to. There, that will do, Marian," he continued, starting up before the scarf was half arranged; "and now go home as fast as you can. Let the people have any thing they want, I shall soon follow you."

"Not before you have had some refreshment," said Lady Seymour, as May left the room, and ringing the bell in spite of remonstrance she ordered in the tray "as quick as thought," much to the secret satisfaction of Mrs. Barnard, who calculating on such an arrangement, had lingered to partake of the same. Lionel Revis took a biscuit and a glass of water, pleading the fever he was in already as an excuse for declining wine. "I think you are wise, my friend," said Mr. Lloyd, taking up his hat, "and while you are so employed, with your leave, I will go and look at your patient at the Rectory. I may be able to relieve her for the present till the acknowledged medical authority arrives."

Mr. Barnard rose to accompany him, but was detained by his wife's eager hand. "My dear, so fatigued as you are—half a glass of sherry would do you good: I need not apologize to so good a wife as Lady Seymour for mentioning it; you are such a precious charge, and such an obstinate one!"

"Apologize?" repeated Sir John, good-humouredly filling a bumper of sherry and handing it to Mr. Barnard, who looked confused and nervous as he took it,—"apologize, my dear madam, for setting so good an example?

I wish it was more generally followed. Lady Seymour's only anxiety about me is lest I should eat and drink too much. Permit me to give you a glass of wine, after the alarm you have suffered."

"Thank you, Sir John, I hardly ever touch wine myself—it is only as a medicine, in fact, that we think of it at all. I like to have a little good wine in the house for poor dear Jane (with a smile at Mr. Revis), so delicate as she is; and for Mr. Barnard, when he comes in worn out in body and mind; but anything is good enough for me."

"Nay!" said Sir John, politely, "that we will not allow; pray sit down:" and the lady sat down, and drank her glass of wine, and then had another, laughing as she did so, at "a thing she had never done before in her life, to take two glasses of wine in the evening; but really it was like a cordial after the nervous agitation of the evening:" and with the help of cake and biscuits, she had contrived to make a tolerable repast, by the time Mr. Revis rose to go. As he wished to consult his curate privately, this was their signal of departure also; and with many expressions of affection to Julia, and all the family, she took her leave, accompanied by her husband, who had scarcely opened his lips all the evening, and who left his wine untasted.



CHAPTER II.

RS. BARNARD was a lady of considerable ability: not that trifling ideal ability which enables one man to write problems that nobody can solve; and another to make solutions that nobody can understand: and another to write poems that draw tears from your eyes, and another invent machines that draw pounds from your purse,—but ability of that solid, practical kind that turns to account, and puts money in your pocket, and stares you in the face in your housekeeping book. Nobody in the world knew better how to calculate to a hairbreadth the expenses she must incur and the expenses she might avoid. She had long been apprenticed to the business, and might be pronounced unrivalled. At the time of her first acquaintance with Mr. Barnard, then a widower with one daughter, she was a widow with two: living on a small income in a country town, diligently following their profession of seeking a settlement. The young ladies, brought up with no other view, and with their heads filled with visions of race-balls, and officers'-balls, and pic-nics, and water parties, where they had been taught to believe the said settlements might take place, were filled with indignation when they found their mother had accepted a curate;—getting married

herself instead of marrying them, and banishing to a life of rural obscurity, the fashion and the accomplishments that were to be the joy of the town. They remonstrated, but to no purpose: their mother's reasons for accepting counterbalanced all theirs for refusing, and Mrs. Bellamy became Mrs. Barnard in an eventful hour for the gentle curate, his parish, and his daughter Jane.

Mrs. Barnard, as I said before, was a lady of considerable ability; it remains to be shown in what respect. She and her daughters had been too long accustomed to the ways of the world, and the amusements of a gossiping society, to sit contentedly down into the humdrum of a parsonage, with no balls, no morning concerts, no parties of any sort or kind, but school feasts, and club feasts, and Christmas beef, and flannel-petticoat feasts: with nothing in short to employ them but what was useful, or to amuse them but what they provided for themselves. The ennui and discontent of the Miss Bellamys is not to be described, and nothing could give them comfort but the prospect of escaping once a year, when Mr Barnard could take his holiday, to some gay watering place, where they might appear as in former times, and forget all the misery of being rational and unnoticed. During the life of old Mr. Chambers, this had not been easy, as Mr. Barnard had all the duty to do, and could not readily obtain an assistant; but now that they had the new rector, so active himself, and so courteously good-natured to them, the ladies entertained little doubt of a satisfactory arrangement, provided the expense could be afforded. It was in saving money against that happy period, that Mrs. Barnard shewed her peculiar talent; in the wonderful tact, with which she would "drop in" on her neighbours at meal-

times, and avoid the trouble of such domestic arrangements at home; in the dextrous hints by which she obtained presents; or when hints failed, as they would after a time, in the winning frankness with which she would ask for a favourite vegetable, or carry away the remains of a choice dish;—not for herself, as she pathetically said, but for a little surprise for her over-worked husband, or to tempt the appetite of poor dear Jane. The liberal, unsuspecting nature of Lionel Revis rendered him peculiarly liable to these light forages, and was indeed a considerable source of saving in Mrs. Barnard's accounts. His chivalrous respect for the race of womankind, a respect belonging more to the olden time than the present, and his anxiety for the comfort of his fellow-labourer in the Lord's vineyard, made it a pleasure to send vegetables and fruit, or any choice thing he possessed, for the gratification of the ladies; the delicate health of Jane was a plea he could never withstand; and many a bottle of the old wine, with which the Bishop had stored his nephew's cellar, found its way to the curate's: was accepted in Miss Barnard's name, and met with universal approbation when the Miss Bellamys gave a musical party.

Poor Jane Barnard! little was she aware of the use made of her name: so generally respected, that it opened every heart, and softened even the satire of Lady Seymour's observant eye. It would indeed have been a double surprise, for she had the humblest idea of her own consequence, and spent her hours in doing good, without a thought of merit, or a desire for praise. She was plain in features, quiet and shy in her habits, antediluvian in her dress. An income of one hundred pounds per annum, bequeathed by her grandmother, made her in reality of

considerable importance in the household, as she paid seventy pounds of it towards the general expenses; nevertheless she was nobody, and content to be so:—more content than her sisters were to see her with thirty pounds a year, "to do what she liked with." What could she have to do with it all? Anything did for Jane, plain cotton gowns, gigantic straw bonnets with the scantiest allowance of ribbon, thick shoes that Joseph Mayflower might have worn, cotton gloves that May certainly would not, a venerable parasol that put Mr. Revis's white-handled umbrella out of countenance—presenting a tout ensemble that would have drawn tears from the Quarterly Review, if reviews or reviewers can be moved to weep. The whole could not cost her ten pounds a year, and how ridiculous for her to have so much money! Twenty pounds to be spent in flannel petticoats and red cloaks for the old women, and hymn-books and spelling-books for the dirty children at the schools, when her sisters were often at their wits' end to pay their dressmaker's bill—was very grating to their feelings: and many were the ingenious little devices resorted to, to extract from Jane the supplies which their mother's frugality withheld. Neither Letitia nor Hester, (Letty and Hetty as they were called, much against their will) had the foresight that distinguished Mrs. Barnard: they were for gratifying present wishes, at whatever cost; and she was for making everything give place to the future: but all were agreed in the importance of knowing the way to the purses of others, and of never paying unless you are obliged, or of buying anything you can get in any other way.

It was an eventful day, we said, for Mr. Barnard and his daughter, when Mrs. Bellamy consented to take the

management of them upon herself. Till that period, Jane had been her father's counsellor, companion, and assistant: and everything had gone on quietly and well. Her sincere, humble piety, her methodical habits of punctuality and order, acted as a check on his desultory indolence; her perseverance stood in the stead of talent, and industry of quickness; the parish was regularly visited, his sermons were written in good time, family prayer and religious reading were scrupulously attended to:—all was changed now: if Mr. Barnard had fixed to visit a sick person, or to shut himself up in his study for private duties, there was sure to be something he must do; somebody had promised to call whom he must wait and see; or the girls must walk to Myrton, and no one else could escort them; or they had some work to do, and a book to be finished, and he must read to them: and to all these *musts* he was accustomed to yield, at first because it was only for *this once*, and in time as a matter of course, but at the expense of his influence, his usefulness, and his peace of mind.

It was on the morning after the fire, that the family were finishing a breakfast, somewhat later than parsonage breakfasts usually are; and the conversation as usual, turned on the plans for the day.

We transcribe a part of it, as a fair specimen of the way the family schemes were formed and executed.

"Mamma," said Miss Letty, who was considered to have a fine musical talent, that must be cultivated, "how shall I get to the rehearsal in the town hall to-day?"

"Really, my dear, I don't know: I will see about it; perhaps your papa will kindly walk with you."

"I am afraid it is impossible to-day, my love," said

Mr. Barnard, gravely, "for I promised to be at the Rectory this morning, to consult what is to be done for the poor people who are burnt out. I must go presently and examine the ruins."

"Dear me, sir," said Letty, "what good will that do to anybody? Your examination will not build them up again."

"No, my dear," returned he, with his usual mildness, which no pertness could ruffle, "but something may be done, in the way of recovering articles, which the heat last night prevented, at any rate I must be on the spot."

Letty looked much provoked, and tried various arguments to gain her point; but Mr. Barnard had received a hint from his young chief which he could not but take, and even his wife was shrewd enough to see there was no remedy. Still Letitia *must* go to the Rehearsal, because some friends at Myrton, the most fashionable they knew there, expected her, and would give her luncheon: her mother could not, her sister would not escort her;—then one of the maids must go. "Not Martha, I am sure," said Miss Hetty, "she has all the work to finish, as I suppose we shall see nothing of Mrs. Plowden to-day, and I *must* have my new dress for Sunday. Here is Julia Seymour come fresh from London, and she will have everything in the last fashion; and we shall look as if we came out of Noah's Ark, like Jane. Anne must go, if anybody does."

"So she must," said her mother, "and we must contrive to have no cooking to-day: I dare say it can be managed. My dear Owen, you will dine with Mr. Revis, of course: Jane, my dear, I am sure you would like to call on your friend Julia this morning—she asked very kindly after you last night."

"Did she?" said Jane, looking up from the coarse work which had employed her while the others breakfasted: —she was a most inexorable early riser, and her breakfast was over before their eyes were open: "did she, the dear child?" repeated Jane, and she went on sewing with impeded progress, for a tear had fallen on her thread.

"Indeed she did, and will be pleased to see you, I am sure: but you had better not call too soon: she will be busy unpacking and writing letters most likely: suppose we say between twelve and one, and Hetty can accompany you. That will do nicely, I can take care of myself, and Anne will be at liberty. Ring the bell, Letitia."

"Jane, you are nearest—just ring the bell," said Miss Letty, yawning as if the fatigue of getting up at half past eight was too much for any one's constitution; "you do not feel so tired as I do."

"Are you tired, Letty," said Jane, gravely, as she complied with her request; "then I am afraid you will not be able to walk to Myrton."

"Oh, I shall be better presently. Anne, I shall want you to go to Myrton with me at twelve o'clock."

"We shall not dine at home, Anne," added her mistress, seeing the remonstrance just bursting from Anne's lips, "and Martha must go on with the work. Has Mrs. Plowden been here this morning?"

"Yes, ma'am, she came to fetch some things she left last night in her hurry. She says her babies are both too ill for her to leave 'em;—she was in a great taking, ma'am, and cried dreadful. She says she's ruined; and she hopes you'll settle her account to-night, ma'am."

"Oh certainly,—of course. Has any body been to look at the damage?"

"Mr. Revis was there at day-break, ma'am, and set two men to keep guard, as he thinks some goods may be found among the rubbish, and there are plenty of folk to help themselves. And Mr. Hargrave has been on his way to the Hall, and Sir John Seymour was there just now—sure! there's some one at the front door:" and Anne whisked away to hide her apron; and the party in question, finding her tap not attended to as promptly as expected, came round to the window, and looked merrily in. "It is Julia!" cried Jane, rushing, work in arms, to meet her, and dropping in her eagerness a bundle of patterns, a large pair of cutting-out scissors, three reels of cotton, a needle book, and pincushion of considerable dimensions, and more tape and buttons than we should venture to estimate. "You dear, dear girl, how kind of you to come to me so soon!"

"Are you at home at this unreasonable hour, Mrs. Barnard?" cried Julia, laughing, "and may I be admitted at the door?"

"My dear Miss Seymour! that must be a strange hour by day or night that you are not welcome, or any one from the dear Lodge. Run, Jane, and let your friend in: take her into the sitting-room." Jane eagerly obeyed, and had the comfort, to her unutterable, of folding her long absent favourite once more in her arms—covering her with kisses, as well as with the dust and shreds of her work, with which her own person was copiously invested. Mrs. Barnard followed with a hundred welcomes, and the Miss Bellamys hurried over their breakfast in hopes of a supply of London news. "You are early indeed, my dear Miss Seymour," said the former, "or else we are behind our time; but Mr. Barnard was

up so late last night at work for those poor people, he was quite exhausted this morning, and I persuaded him to exceed his usual hour:—Jane was just saying she should go and lunch with you when she thought you would have done all your unpacking: but now of course, you are come to spend the morning, and take an early dinner with us."

"Thank you, no," said Julia, "I have no time to spare this morning: I came to steal Jane to walk with me, and she can pay me her call afterwards, which will be all right and proper. Run, dear Jane, and put on your bonnet, for I have a whole round of visits to make. I should not have been here so early, but papa was going to look at the ruins, and the temptation of his company was not to be resisted."

Jane hastened to comply: she flew to her room, and bolted the door, and throwing herself on her knees, burst into a flood of joyous, grateful tears. A weight she had never owned, even in private, was removed from her spirits, her friend had returned unchanged; if possible, more loving and lovely than ever: the world had not altered her affection, she was her own, and none but hers!

Never was there between woman and woman a more absorbing devotion than that of poor Jane Barnard to Julia Seymour. Its growth had been silent and slow, but its root was twined with her heartstrings; a devotion that thrilled at her footsteps, fired at her name, grew sick with longing in her absence, and trembled with jealousy at the approach of others: it was the bright spot of her existence; the only romantic vision she had ever known; the only break in the monotony of the manual labours in which her time was spent: which served to assure her

that plain and homely and stupid as she thought herself, there was still something in her that could be loved:— and oh! how precious such an assurance is, let those tell as best they can, who have been among the unloved ones of earth!

It was a severe disappointment to Jane, when at the period of Julia's leaving school, a succession of infantine illnesses at home kept her in exile, and drove her to accept the friendly invitations which had now engaged her so many months. She had so calculated on this season, when Julia would be at liberty, and all their oft planned schemes of mutual improvement and pleasure were to be accomplished, that the blank was bitterly felt: more bitterly when the thought arose, as rise it would, that Julia was with other friends whom she might perhaps love better. "I know I am stupid, thought Jane; I am no society for her, so clever as she is, she will not care about seeing me, if she has left some handsome fashionable friend behind in London." This was what had weighed on her bosom, and which Julia's warm manner had so happily dispelled. That her first visit should be to *her*, her first plan about *her*: oh! how like dear Julia's warm heart, and consideration for others! and Jane hastened to equip herself as she thought her friend would most approve, and even turned back from the door to see if her shawl was pinned evenly; a piece of vanity she had not been guilty of for months.

Even at the best, poor Jane's appearance was such as would rather have astonished Julia's London friends; and Julia herself, after being unused to its effect so long, was more struck with it than she had ever been before; but she took care not to show her feelings, secretly resolving to curtail the fair proportions of that extensive bonnet on

the first favourable occasion. A bag of similarly colossal structure being carefully packed with a variety of books, bottles, and such small deer, Jane suspended it on her arm, and declared herself ready. Mrs. Barnard, feeling this a safe moment for profuse hospitality, warmly pressed wine and cake on Miss Seymour's acceptance, and hoped another time she would spend the whole day: and when the friends were fairly out of hearing, turned discontentedly to her daughters. "How provoking that she should come so early: there is an end of your going to the Lodge to-day, Hetty: well, I will tell you what we must do; we will take an early dinner with the Lloyds: it is an attention that is due to them, and we will put up with their close little parlour for once."

"Now, my dear Jane," said Julia, as they closed the gate behind them, "it will be impossible to have any real conversation while your head and heart are in that great bag: I must make a round of visits among the poor people, and we will get that duty done at the same time that you are distributing that pharmacopœia of bottles I see under the handle. Make haste and get rid of them: I am afraid of the corks coming out."

"Bottles?" said Jane, looking down at her bag: "Oh! there is nothing but a little cough mixture, and a lotion, and a composing draught, and a little linseed tea, and that sort of thing."

"My dear Jane, I quite understand: have not I often helped you to carry that bag in old holiday times? only I remember breaking a bottle *once*, and I did not feel quite sure what sort of delicacy there might be in them to-day. By the bye, Jane, when do you mean to make yourself a new bag? I have seen you with this old one ever since I can remember."

"I have no time, and this is quite good enough," said Jane, colouring, and turning the conversation as quickly as she could. They stopped at numerous cottages, and Jane dispensed her gifts, and Julia her smiles and pleasant words, and were welcomed everywhere; and after the gifts and the welcome, came regularly the subject of the fire; on which every one, young or old, had some remark to make, more or less pertinent, as the case might be: and at last, all was given that had to be given, and Jane's bag was nearly emptied. Nearly, not quite, as Julia's inquisitive eye soon detected. "For what favourite patient is that little bonne bouche intended, wrapped up so carefully in paper," she asked, as they struck off from the dusty road across the meadows.

"Guess," said Jane, smiling.

"For Mrs. Plowden's babies?"

"No, they have had something this morning already."

"For the stranger whom Mr. Revis saved?"

"No, I do not know yet what she wants, and Marian is so good a nurse, she cannot require my assistance."

"Then, it is some delicate little attention for Mr. Revis himself:—something in the mitten and muffetee line that is to make his burnt hand better than well: is it so?"

"No," said Jane, colouring, "Mr. Revis is a kind and valuable friend; but he is not the one I love best."

Julia started, and dived into the bag with increased curiosity. "It is for me! I know it is, and here I have it. Oh, what a beautiful reticule! with pockets too, and all complete: quite a "Ladies' Companion. And you have actually done all this for me, dear Jane, and told me you had no time to work for yourself."

"No more I have," said Jane; "I did not call that

work: it was all pleasure, the greatest pleasure I had while you were away. I thought it was the kind of thing you would like: and as you do like it, that's enough, so please say no more about it. I am afraid you are hot and tired: let us go and sit on your favourite bank by the water."

It was a lovely spot to which they now bent their steps, apart from noise and dust of the high-road, sheltered by high arching trees from the sun, and with the clear, cool water flowing at their feet: a beautiful river of which Eastbury was justly proud, and which formed a striking feature in the scenery round Eustace Hall. No sound was to be heard, but the hum of the insects skimming over the water, and the gentle rustling of the leaves over their heads; and the musical stillness to which she was so long unaccustomed, struck deeply on Julia's imagination. "This is poetry!" she exclaimed, after an interval of silence: "poetry, music, and landscape all combined, is it not, Jane?"

"It is pleasant and cool," said Jane, taking a roll of knitting out of a secret passage in the universal bag.

"Pleasant and cool? yes, but my dear Jane, just look across that meadow, observe the beautiful effect of the sunshine on those cows coming up the hill, they look bathed in golden light; it is quite like a picture of Cüyp."

"Ah, yes," said Jane, looking up, without stopping in her work, "yes, very good cows: that dun of James Gray's gives fifteen quarts a day."

"Oh Jane, Jane, incurable Jane!" cried Julia, laughing, and half vexed; "I talk to you of Dutch painting, and your thoughts are on Dutch cheese! But 'patience, cousin, and shuffle the cards.' I must not be hard upon

you: only it is evidently quite time for me to resume your literary education so long interrupted. Tell me what you have been reading since I left you?"

"Reading, love? let me see: I have read Cecil's Remains, which your grandmamma lent me."

"Very right of grandmamma, and very good reading; but you were already half way through it before I went back to school."

"Was I? but I have so little time for reading. We have had several sets of new tracts though, and I read them to the poor people, you know: I have put two aside for you, as they are pretty stories, just what you like, or used to like."

"And like still, dear: I hope I shall never outlive my love for pretty stories: but now about your poetical studies, Jane; have you read the passages I marked for you? did you ever open that volume of poems I sent you on your birthday?"

"Open it, my dear child? it is one of my treasures. Such a handsome binding, and such a pretty book altogether!"

"But the contents, Jane?"

"Well, dear, I dare say the contents are very good: and as you sent it, I tried hard to get some of it by heart; but I am so stupid, it puzzles me, if everything does not go straight forward. The verses that I learnt relate to some story I never heard of, I suppose; for I cannot find out what it means."

"Repeat the passage, and we will see," said Julia. Jane accordingly began with great emphasis

"All day within the dreamy house—"

but there she came to a full stop. "Go on," said Julia,

looking rigidly grave. Jane would if she could, but her memory was so bad: however, she remembered something about " a blue fly singing i' the pane," and a mouse that shrieked in the wainscot, and that old faces looked through the windows, and old voices called her from without, and then that the verse ended as all the others did—

" She said I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead."

But as to *who* said this, and was so plagued with old people and mice and blue flies, she could no more understand than she could answer that difficult question of *who* died, when somebody very imprudently married the barber. " I suppose it is very fine poetry," added Jane, with a sigh.

" I suppose it is," said Julia, unable to help laughing, " don't look so downhearted, poor Jane. I am afraid you have often been aweary, aweary of me and my poets. But you will come to like them in good time."

" I do like them now, when you are reading or reciting to me;" said Jane, " for then you explain any part I do not understand."

" Well then, I will repeat a verse or two out of that same incomprehensible book, and you shall stop me when you are puzzled. It is addressed to some proud young lady of rank, who appears to have flirted for want of something to do."

" What a sad waste of time," said Jane, picking up a fallen stitch.

" Sad indeed, my dear Jane, but I am afraid not uncommon. Now listen."

" Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,
From yon blue heaven above us bent,
The grand old gardener and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.

Howe'er it be, it seems to me
'Tis only noble to be good;
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere!
You pine among your halls and towers;
The languid light of your proud eyes
Is weary of the rolling hours.
In glowing health, with boundless wealth,
Yet sickening of a vague disease;
You know so ill to deal with time,
You needs must play such pranks as these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,
If time hang heavy on your hands,—
Are there no beggars at your gate,
Nor any poor about your lands?
O teach the orphan boy to read,
O teach the orphan girl to sew:
Pray Heaven for a human heart,
And let the foolish Yeoman go!

Jane liked these verses: she had never found them out before; and the simple strength of the lines was not without its effect. She was some little time discovering that the grand old gardener and his wife meant Adam and Eve; but except that difficulty, she found nothing to complain of. "Kind hearts are more than coronets," "I should think so," said Jane, emphatically. The advice in the last verse, too, was quite after her own heart. That Lady Clara should complain of having nothing to do, when her parish had no Sunday-school, almost put her in a passion. "There is one thing I must say though," added Jane, "I think it is the last line, or thereabouts, that tells her to pray for a human heart. While she was about it,

she had better have prayed for a spiritual one: it was too human already."

Julia acknowledged this was a reasonable criticism: and then at Jane's request, repeated the verses two or three times over, till she had mastered the whole sense, and many of the lines, and told her she did not despair now of her progress.

"Thank you, dear," said Jane, still knitting away, "and now, will you tell me—I am so stupid, you know—what use is there in poetry?"

Julia gathered a handful of wild flowers and grasses. "Is there any use in these, Jane?"

"Oh dear, yes: ask Miss Lloyd: she will give you a good use for every one. These are *God's* works, dear."

"And is not poetry God's gift?" said Julia, with enthusiasm, "it was breathed into man with that spiritual life that first distinguished him from the beasts of the field: it rang in his ears on creation's opening day with the echo of the angels' anthem! The power to feel, to discern, to carry the image of the beautiful; to create new thoughts, to call up glorious recollections, to stamp immortality on senseless stone; to rise above earth, and earth's petty cares and doings, and breathe a fresh, pure, unselfish, uncalculating atmosphere, where mind is all, and God in every mind! *This* is poetry, and it was not made so by man!"

"You know best, dear," said Jane, surprised at her friend's excitement; "I did not know all poetry was like that, but then, you know, I have read so little."

"All poetry is *not*," said Julia, shaking her head: "the precious gift is often misapplied: and I have read poems, (you know my reading has been as indiscriminate

as yours is rigidly select) poems so exquisite in language, so musical in cadence, you would think it would require the holiest season, and the purest state of mind to do them justice: but with all this external beauty, the spirit is that of heathenism; they might have soothed Achilles' angry soul, or swayed the conqueror's passions at Alexander's feast. You never leave the atmosphere of this world: you hear no note of angel's music: all is of the earth, earthy; and the harmony is ravishing, like the songs of Milton's spirits; but, like theirs, serves only to banish memory of heaven."

"But why do you read such things, dear Julia?"

"It is a bad practice: in fact, I read some before I knew good from bad: now I am more careful, and I hope to be quite so, in future. It is the great danger of having nothing particular to do, that one is tempted to find amusement in books, without sufficiently considering whether they are good for the mind, or not. I hope now, we shall be often together, and we will read some of the poetry I have been talking about, and other books besides, that may open our minds, and furnish our heads: and you must teach me in return how to live that good and useful existence, which poets may dream of, but which you put in practice."

The church clock striking at this moment reminded them how time was speeding on, and one of their calls still unperformed; and by mutual consent they rose and turned into the lane that led back to the village, to the comfortable dwelling of Miss Lloyd.

"My dear Miss Julia! my dear Miss Jane! well, this is a double pleasure indeed;" was their first greeting at the old lady's garden gate, where they found her with

basket, scissors, and trowel, performing some of the mysterious agricultural operations wherein she took delight: "My dear Miss Julia, I must have a kiss after such a long absence—there's a hearty one! I am so glad to see you. David told me about you yesterday, and he said you were looking so well: prettier than ever, and quite a woman: ha! ha! I have made her blush, haven't I, Miss Jane? And how does your good Papa do, and Mrs. Barnard, and Miss Letty, and Miss Hetty? all well?—*So* glad to hear it: and dear kind Sir John, and her ladyship, and Lady Lovel, and Mr. Henry, and the dear children? I saw them all yesterday: quite well? that is good hearing. Come in, pray come in."

They did so, as soon as she would let them pass, and begged they might not interrupt what she was doing.

"Thank you, my dears; you're very considerate: suppose I just clear up a bit here, to leave the place tidy, against Davy comes in: he's so particular, you know, more of an old maid even than I am, and that is saying a great deal, isn't it? well, then, I'll go on, as I was saying: I was getting in my little crop of camomile: it is about time; such a sweet season it has been for camomile; I never saw it finer: and I am rather proud of mine—all my own rearing: such a fine thing, a little camomile tea is, the first thing in the morning: I wish you would try my receipt.—You don't fancy it perhaps? Well, young people are apt to prefer the sweets to the bitters in everything; you'll think differently bye and bye, all in good time: but as I was saying about the camomile tea, if you would only persuade your good Papa, Miss Julia, to try it instead of all that bitter ale: it would do him a great deal more good; twice as wholesome,

and not at all unpleasant; rather refreshing than otherwise. Will you promise to try?"

"I would, Miss Lloyd, certainly," said Julia, "if I thought there was any chance of success. I do not like wasting my good advice."

"My dear, his own sense will tell him: now there's Mr. Revis, our Mr. Greatheart, as I call him, ha! ha! he complained of such a headache one day after walking in the sun, and I sent him a comfortable jug of camomile tea, all nicely ready; and I have never heard him complain since; it is an infallible cure."

"Did he drink it?" asked Julia, gravely.

"Of course he did, my dear; at least I never heard to the contrary: but I am sure he must, he has been so well ever since. There, now that must do for the present, and we'll go in doors; I have so much to say to you, I don't know how to begin."

"Never mind," said Julia, "we will go on talking; and we shall come to the beginning sooner than we shall to the end."

Miss Lloyd laughed good humouredly: indeed, she never got through half a dozen sentences without a laugh: it had been her chief amusement all her life long, and had kept her in health and spirits under a variety of circumstances which would have crushed a less buoyant nature. She had the kindest heart in the world, and the most notable fingers; with a real genius for receipts and remedies, that delighted in nothing so much as to give illnesses with good things, and cure them with detestable ones. Before her guests could remonstrate, she had dived into a cupboard, full to the brim with old china and preserves, and covered the little table with home-made cakes

and marmalade, and fruit, and raspberry vinegar, and currant wine, and pressed these luxuries on them with such earnestness and anxiety, they were forced to accept, whether agreeable or not, the stream of conversation flowing on the while.

"Well, my dears, only to think about this terrible fire! shocking, wasn't it? and so unexpectedly too," added she (as if fires ever came by appointment); "and yet I won't say that, for it was somehow expected—you'll laugh Miss Julia, when I tell you—but the moment they began to meddle with that fire-engine, said I to David, 'Take my word for it, Davy,' I said, 'we shall hear of somebody burnt to-night.' These were my identical words, as he'll tell you—I was sure of it: the engine had been left quiet all this time, and not a stick caught fire; but directly it was pulled about, we had half a dozen cottages blazing at once. And here is Mr. Revis, he laughed at me as you do; but now he is laid up with a burnt hand; he's wishing, I'll be bound, he had left things as he found them; but men will always be meddling, as I told Davy, when he went to the closet in my absence and broke some of my best cups and saucers."

Julia objected to this attack on the Rector: she thought it was a most fortunate thing he had previously ascertained the state of the fire engine, as it prevented the loss of time in trying it, and was the cause of the assistance being fetched from Myrton without delay. "Well, my dear," said Miss Lloyd, "you are quite right to stand up for your minister, such a minister as he is too. He's sure to be a favourite among the young ones, ha! ha! ha! David went to the Rectory this morning to enquire after him, and saw your friend Mrs. Mayflower. She

had been up all night, he said, with that poor soul, Mrs. Wortley, whom the Rector saved: her leg had been sadly crushed by a falling beam, and she was in a terrible state. David gave all the help he could; and I sent her something, so I hope she will soon recover: it appears she had only been lodging at Jacob Reynolds's a short time, and meant to leave to-day: curious, isn't it? for some good end, we may be sure, only she doesn't seem to think so. It's worth breaking a leg to be under the same roof as Mr. Greatheart. Well, Miss Julia, what does your Papa say is to be done for our poor folks? Is there to be a meeting, and a memorial to my Lord? Oh, that reminds me, dear, I nearly forgot: you came in the same carriage with my Lord and his daughter: what is she like? I have often seen him; is she at all like him in the face?"

"Not the smallest resemblance," said Julia, indignantly, "he is remarkably ill tempered, and she has the countenance of an angel."

"Well, to be sure! only think of that! It will happen sometimes you know: and now you mention it, I remember the housekeeper at the Hall saying the same thing, only she put it in a milder way: but there is a delightful lady living with them; quite a mother to Miss Eustace, I understand: did you see her yesterday?"

"Yes," said Julia.

"Well, my dear, you are so chary of your news, one has to pump as hard as your papa did last night! Were you not very much struck with her manner to the young lady?"

"Very much," said Julia, drily.

"Charming, wasn't it? how valuable such a friend must be to a motherless girl! Ah, well, poor thing, with

all her fortune and her grandeur, I don't envy her: there's no blessing like a good mother after all; is there, Miss Julia?"

Julia's eye looked ready assent; and Jane, without knowing it, gave an audible sigh.

"My dear Miss Jane, another glass of currant wine? just a drop: I am afraid there is nothing on the table you care for. Would you like a little sage tea? I often take it myself, and it is ready in a minute: Miss Julia, have you any fancy for it? It would give me so much pleasure to get you anything you like."

Julia earnestly protested she had not the smallest inclination for the refreshing beverage offered her, and made an anxious sign to Jane that it was time to go.

"Are you in a hurry, my dears? Well, I won't keep you: I was just thinking of a little turn myself; and if you won't mind an old woman's company —" Both immediately begged she would give them that pleasure; and while she was equipping, her brother came in. "Heyday! what have we here? feasting this time of day? sweets too, and currant wine; the very worst things you can touch! And just going out without putting anything by; that's the way to be tidy and comfortable! Well, my dears, I am very glad to see you."

"So it appears," said Julia, "by your making us so welcome: don't be alarmed, we are going directly. Has anything been settled about the poor people?"

"There's to be a meeting, I believe; and a subscription of course," said the old gentleman, busily putting away the *débris* of their repast, and dusting the table with his handkerchief. "Mr. Revis will not let slip so good an opportunity of probing our pockets, we may be quite

sure. Well, my dears, you are not going, surely, and Lizzy too? What gadabouts ladies are! trot, trot, from morning till night! There, take yourselves away. You will find Master Harry and his dogs just up the hill, looking out for somebody; some lady, of course, for he grew scarlet when I asked him."

"Oh, indeed! we will soon find out," said Julia, as a sudden idea shot into her mind, which induced her to hurry on her companions at an unusual pace, till they reached Harry, who was certainly lounging along the road, with the air of an impatient expectant. A little cross examination, extracted an acknowledgment, that he had seen a carriage with the Eustace livery pass down one of the lanes, and he thought it would most probably return that way. Julia turned eagerly to her friends. "My dear Jane, if it does, and if Miss Eustace is in it, you will see, without exception, the most beautiful, elegant, charming person you ever saw in your life. *I* have never met with any one so fascinating."

"How long have you known her?" asked Jane, quietly.

"My dear, I only saw her on the railroad yesterday: I do not know her at all yet."

"I thought you did by what you said," said Jane.

"No, no! but I hope I shall soon, and intimately too: I shall do my best to make friends with her. Mamma means to call immediately; and as soon as I can, you shall be introduced too, Jane, for I shall want your opinion. But here she comes," added Julia, without noticing her friend's countenance, on which vexation was plainly depicted, "can we stop the carriage, Harry, or must we let her pass with a bow?"

Harry made no answer: his eyes were on the elegant little vehicle, drawn by two small ponies, with brilliant harness, blue rosettes, and white reins, followed by a groom in livery, and driven by the fair hands of Beatrice Eustace herself, which at that moment bowled swiftly up the hill, and thanks to the absent mind of the young lady, was in the act of passing the party of spectators unnoticed. To Harry's unutterable joy, however, the wind suddenly blew off her white veil: it fluttered before the eyes of the ponies, who started just enough to afford an excuse for his darting into the road, and forcibly arresting them. Miss Eustace of course drew in her reins immediately, and Julia, emulating Harry's alertness, hastened to restore the veil, and was pleased to find herself recognised and welcomed both by Beatrice and Mrs. Hargrave, who occupied the other seat of the carriage. "I was little aware," said Miss Eustace, "when we were conversing yesterday, that we were such near neighbours. I hope we shall often meet, Miss Seymour, and renew our discussion on books and people."

"You cannot wish it more earnestly than I do," returned Julia, and the sparkle of her eyes confirmed her words; "but I had my doubts whether I did not rather annoy you with my questions: pray, have you heard anything of his Lordship's pocket book?"

"Nothing," said Miss Eustace, colouring slightly; while a half smile passed over the mouth of Mrs. Hargrave, who observed, "We are not likely to do so, I fear, Miss Seymour. His lordship is seriously annoyed, and it certainly is a very singular circumstance." Miss Eustace looked at her with a mingled expression of resentment and entreaty; and Julia, on whom none of these

glances were lost, hastened to change the subject by alluding to the fire. While she was describing it at length to Beatrice, Mrs. Hargrave was engaged in a most affable conversation with Miss Lloyd, of whom she said she had received such a description from her cousin at Myrton, she felt like an old acquaintance;—but all the while took care not to lose a word that was said by the others. Julia described the scenes she had witnessed; the heroism of the rector; the narrow escape of the infants; and his own accident when saving a poor stranger whom nobody knew, and whose leg was broken by a beam. Miss Eustace enquired her name: Julia had forgotten it, but proceeded to inform her that a subscription was being opened for the sufferers, adding with a smile, "Our hopes mainly rest on Lord Eustace's liberality, as the landlord. May we hope for your mediation?"

"You will need none," replied Beatrice, warmly, "in such a cause my father's own heart will be his dictator; and you may rely on his cordial co-operation and liberal aid. May I trouble you with a small contribution for the poor stranger you mention? Hers is a deplorable case, indeed."

Mrs. Hargrave looked quickly round, as a glittering coin passed into Julia's hand, and Miss Lloyd's attention was immediately attracted. "Well, that is very good of you, Miss Eustace, and the poor soul will bless you for it—on her knees, I was going to say, only as her leg is broken she might find it difficult: how shocking of you, Miss Julia, to laugh! but as I was going to tell you, Mrs. Hargrave, it's a very singular thing, that she meant to leave Eastbury this very day, but for this accident. I wonder what she will turn out; there must be some good reason for her being detained."

"There is good in everything, we are told, if we would only see it," replied Mrs. Hargrave, "and if as Miss Eustace seems to infer, his Lordship intends to make good all the poor people's losses, they will probably be all the better of being burnt out."

"It is a great comfort to hear you say so, Miss Eustace," added Julia, "and I am sure your liberality as well as his, will be gratefully appreciated. And now may I ask you to come home and take luncheon with us? It would be so friendly and unformal, and would give Mamma such pleasure!"

"Are you sure of that?" asked Beatrice, smiling, and looking much disposed to accept the proposal.

"Quite sure: ask Miss Lloyd, if there is anybody she knows less partial to formalities than Mamma: she was only saying to-day she must lose no time in calling at the Hall, as you would never venture to see us without.

"You are very kind," said Miss Eustace, "if I could feel quite certain it would be no intrusion" . . . She was interrupted by a dry cough from Mrs. Hargrave, which as effectually checked her as the white reins did her ponies. Julia looked eagerly from one to the other. "You will come, I see—you have half consented. Mrs. Hargrave, lend me your influence." Mrs. Hargrave had drawn herself up, and looked very straight, and very reserved.

"I must advise Miss Eustace not to accept your kind invitation to-day, Miss Seymour: she will remember, if she thinks for a moment, many duties that she must accomplish this afternoon, and her father will expect her home. Perhaps you may never have learnt a very old adage, but a very sound one, "Duty first, and pleasure afterwards." Miss Eustace bit her lips. "I can see no

duty in the way," she said, in a low voice. "*I* see it, and that is enough," was the reply, in a voice still lower. Julia felt uncomfortable: there was a struggle going on before her eyes, and she could not take part in it, for fear of doing mischief. Miss Eustace looked vexed, irritated, and uncertain: too proud to yield, and too timid to resist: the ponies, in spite of Harry's patting and coaxing, began to paw and fret, and toss their sleek heads impatiently. Mrs. Hargrave looked equally impatient. "We are keeping these ladies in the sun most pitilessly," she said; "you had better drive on, Miss Eustace."

"Which is the nearest way to your house?" asked Beatrice, turning resolutely to Julia, "we might just call for a few minutes, at least."

"Not *now*," said Mrs. Hargrave, "there is not time."

"We must make time, then," said Miss Eustace: her dark eyes kindling as she gathered up her reins; but at a whisper from her companion the gleam passed away, and her whole attitude took the expression of dejected languor Julia had observed before. She bent down to her new friend, and held out her delicately gloved hand, that trembled with agitation, "another time I hope—you will come and see me soon, will you not?" And without waiting for an answer, drove away, leaving the party gazing after them with mingled emotions: Harry, all admiration—Julia, all indignant interest: Miss Lloyd delighted with both, but with Mrs. Hargrave in particular; and Jane Barnard much relieved that she was not going to meet them at luncheon at the lodge.

"What do you think of her?" asked Julia, eagerly. Jane pondered for a moment, and then said, "she makes me think of those favourite verses of yours."

"Verses, which? 'She walks in beauty like the night?'"

"She *drives* in beauty, I should say," suggested Miss Lloyd, facetiously."

"Classical, upon my word," said Harry: "Juno and Minerva! Mrs. Hardicanute, or whatever you call her, is just my idea of Minerva, with her 'duty first, and pleasure afterwards': she is quite right though; the duty is to be civil before her face, and the pleasure to abuse her behind her back."

Jane listened patiently to these remarks, and then observed they were not the verses she alluded to. "It was about Lady Clara, Julia, that you were teaching me this morning, and of her being weary of time with every thing to make her happy."

"I know what you mean," said Harry, "one of our fellows turned them into Latin last half:

'I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,
You pine among your halls and towers—
The languid light of your proud eyes
Is weary of the rolling hours.' &c. &c.

Was that what you referred to, Miss Barnard?"

"Yes," said Jane, "I thought of them all the time she was talking, though I could not quite remember the words."

"Nor shall you ever remember them," said Julia, "if you turn them to such bad account. My beautiful Miss Eustace compared to Lady Clara Vere de Vere; what an encouragement to me to enlarge your literary studies! I have taught you poetry, and your profit on't is, you know how to quote—and be satirical into the bargain: I'll teach you no more."

On flew the elegant pony-carriage, on wheels and

springs as light and easy as if care and trouble were merely intended for foot passengers. Was there none indeed, in the burden it so gaily bore? Had any eye been near to examine the countenance of Miss Eustace as she swept along, urging her spirited ponies to their most spirited pace; it would have recoiled in pity and dismay: so dark was the expression of its deep-seated melancholy. She leaned forward in the carriage, the reins held slackly in one hand; the other continually and nervously passing the whip over the backs of her steeds, as if by their speed to fly from herself, or by rapid motion to silence thought. Not a word passed for some time, till Mrs. Hargrave, who could bear the pace no longer, angrily bade her desist. "You have given vent to your temper long enough: now drive moderately, and like a lady, or I must get out and leave you to yourself!"

The tone of voice was sharp and imperative, and was silently obeyed; for Miss Eustace was vanquished, and she knew it.

"These scenes are very unpleasant to me," continued her companion, "and show very little consideration either for my feelings or your own dignity. However, it is as well it has occurred, that we may understand clearly how matters are to go on. I told you before we came here, that I expected—demanded from you, deference in the presence of your friends: I will not appear as your inferior: you must show by your manner, by your words, and by your submission, that you consider me a friend and guardian—not merely a hired companion."

"Friend and guardian!" repeated Miss Eustace, bitterly.

"Yes, your pride revolts at the term, I see; yet there have been seasons when you have been glad of my friend-

ship, and of my guardianship too." Miss Eustace turned away her head and writhed as if she was stung. "You perfectly understood me, you said," continued Mrs. Hargrave, "before we left town, and you were content: of course, I supposed you would abide by the conditions; instead of which, when you meet Miss Seymour—the daughter of the most influential person you are likely to meet here, you assume all the airs of a mistress, without the appearance of consulting my taste or opinion. I was resolved you should not pay that visit; nor shall you go anywhere without paying me the respect I claim, and can enforce."

"Respect? no, that is beyond your power," said Beatrice, "I can never feel respect for one who leaves me none for myself."

"We will not split on terms," said Mrs. Hargrave, with a slight sneer, "deference is a more appropriate term, perhaps: and deference I will have. You have seriously offended me this morning, and now you may take the consequences."

They had reached the park gate as she spoke, and in another minute were bowling over smooth green turf, most refreshing after the dust of the roads, but of which the ponies alone appreciated the enjoyment. They had it all their own way now, for Miss Eustace's hand had dropped on her knee, and the reins lay loosely on their backs; her whip hung idly over the side of the carriage, and her head bent dejectedly down: and in this manner at the laziest possible amble, they were moving along the green path, when a voice from behind the trees shouted in no very complimentary accents, "Is that the style in which you are accustomed to drive, Beatrice?"

Miss Eustace started, as at that sound she always did; collected both the reins and herself, and cast a hurried anxious glance at her companion. It must have been a well practised eye, however, that could have gathered information from Mrs. Hargrave's countenance, veiled as it was at that moment, by the coldest reserve. Beatrice's eager endeavours to meet her eye were in vain: and in another instant Lord Eustace rode up to them. "Is this your usual constitutional pace, Mrs. Hargrave?" he enquired more good-humouredly than before.

"*My* pace, my lord? you should know me better than to suppose I ever meddle with what I do not understand. I leave driving to the hands that hold the reins."

"I—I believe I was thinking of something else," said Beatrice, hurriedly.

"I believe you were," said his lordship, sarcastically, "and in a little while you would have done some mischief or other to the ponies, or the carriage. How can you be so inert and careless? It cannot surely be much trouble to attend to what you are about, in return for all mine in getting this equipage for you?"

Miss Eustace was silent; Mrs. Hargrave looked at the peer, and slightly shrugged her shoulders. "Yes, yes, I quite understand," said he, "a little display of temper; the country is too dull for young ladies, I suppose: they must put up with it, however, for the present, and I think what is gay enough for me, may be so for my family. Attend to me, Miss Eustace, if you please."

Miss Eustace raised her eyes for a moment and bowed. "Have you seen or heard anything of the fire last night?"

"We met Miss Seymour," replied Beatrice, hesitating

from nervousness, as much as if it was anything she was ashamed of, "and heard the account from her."

"And much gratified she was, and indeed so was I," added Mrs. Hargrave, pointedly, "to hear of your lordship's liberal intentions towards the poor people. I only hope it will not encourage them to make bonfires throughout the village; but I make no doubt they will be all the better for this one."

"My liberal intentions, Mrs. Hargrave? I have never stated what my intentions were to a living soul."

"Could it be my want of hearing then? impossible! I am sure I understood Miss Eustace to say, you were ready to come forward and make good all their losses, and so did Miss Seymour and her companions, and half the parish are by this time of the same opinion. Was it not so, Miss Eustace?"

"Not exactly," said Beatrice, startled by such an interpretation of her words, "I only meant . . . ."

"You only *meant*," repeated his lordship, every vein of his forehead swelling with sudden rage, "and what presumptuous notion is this of yours, to answer for my proceedings, and make promises and agreements in my name? Do you think, because you are my heiress, that you are mistress already? you are far from that, I can assure you. Wait, if you please, till the vault opens for my coffin, before you assume your territorial rights." And putting spurs to his horse, he set off across the park at a furious gallop, that plainly showed the unusual irritation under which he laboured. Mrs. Hargrave gave a short laugh, "Your villagers, Miss Eustace, are likely to fare the worse for this." Miss Eustace drove on in silence. "It was a curious mistake, certainly," continued her companion,

"and has happened unfortunately, as it will disturb our peace and comfort all the rest of the day. I am sure I do not know what is to be done."

"It must be borne, like other evils," said Beatrice.

"It might have been avoided, like other errors," returned Mrs. Hargrave; "it is only the consequence of your treatment of me. Your father is now seriously offended, and it rests with yourself whether I mediate in your favour or not; you know best if it is worth while."

"Worth while to have peace—to be kindly spoken to!" said Beatrice, "you know well how much I long for rest, or you would not be at such pains to destroy it."

"I only repeat what I have said before," continued her companion, "it is in your own hands. Here is his lordship returning: you had better make haste." Miss Eustace turned pale, and the carriage, and the trees, and the sky, seemed to turn round all at once. "Say but the words, 'forgive me, I will do all you wish,'" whispered Mrs. Hargrave, "and I will take your part. Make up your mind—he is just here."

"Anything, everything, whatever you will," said Beatrice, hardly knowing what she said, but feeling her heart would burst if it had to bear any more. Mrs. Hargrave was satisfied: his lordship came up, ripe for storms and full of bitter sentences; but a little judicious management from one well practised therein, soon calmed his wrath, extracted a pardon for the unpardonable crime, and allowed Miss Eustace to resign her seat to him, while she escaped alone into the depths of the park.

And when alone—alone in her own beautiful inheritance, standing on one of the high craggy banks, between which dashed the river, over masses of white rock, that

kept its pure stream in a perpetual foam, and vexation, and whirl—meet emblem of her own trying destiny—released from the stare of harsh observation, and the restraint she had long learnt to place, like an iron curb, on the fruitless indignation of tortured feeling—nature resumed its own, and the pale cheek flushed, and the downcast eye kindled, and emotions too deep for tears heaved her bosom with sobs of agony. It was not merely her father's causeless anger; it was not merely Mrs. Hargrave's bitter taunts; hard were both to bear, but she was accustomed to bear them: the poignancy of the pang lay within; in the aching void; in the gall of memory; in the terror of a humbled and religious spirit, that has never learnt the way of access to the throne of mercy and love. For Beatrice Eustace, on whose education such sums had been lavished: whose accomplishments and grace and powers of fascination were the charm of the brilliant world she dwelt among; had one crushing burden to bear, by which all else was filled with bitterness; a secret and gnawing sorrow at her heart, and no sense of a Redeemer's presence on whose bosom it might be laid. And therefore it was that she wandered up and down in her solitude uncheered by the song of the birds—by the music of the swift stream—by the soft cool air that played over her drooping head: with no heart for the duties of her station—no spirit to face her daily vexations—yearning for peace, yet never finding it; feeling that all were well lost if she might but find acceptance with God; yet with no one to say to her soul, "believe—believe—and live!"



CHAPTER III.

"GRANDMAMMA," said Julia, as she sat at Lady Lovel's feet in the quiet, sunny apartment reserved for her private use, "Grandmamma, can you imagine what I have been thinking about?"

Lady Lovel took off her spectacles, inserted them as a mark in her favourite volume of Dr. Johnson's Works, and began to consider. "Let me see, my love; you are at your worsted work, are you not? Then I should be apt to conjecture you were laying plans for a walk to Myrton for two skeins of blue wool and as many of green, according to pattern."

"Oh grandmamma! I have more now than I shall ever use; you are on quite a wrong tack; I never, that is, hardly ever think of my work when I am about it."

"Well, my love, I beg your pardon: I could not guess *that*, you will allow. Then what could have employed your thoughts during the last twenty minutes that you have been stitching so quietly at my feet, while I have read six pages of the Rambler? Your new friend, Miss Eustace, perhaps; or your old friend, Jane Barnard; or that bewitching book on the Conquest of Mexico? I dare say, if the truth was known, you have been planning a

way by which the *trista noche* might have been turned into triumph and exultation."

"Wrong! all wrong, grandmamma! and I may as well tell you, for you will never guess. I was thinking neither of books nor friends, but only of myself."

"That is a subject I ought to be acquainted with," said Lady Lovel, tenderly; "for it has occupied my thoughts many and many an hour."

"I know it, grandmamma! I know how you all love me; and it is just that which weighs on my mind. Here I am, a woman, of seventeen, and of no more use to anybody than if I was only seven!"

"Is that the only result of your meditations, my love?" said Lady Lovel, taking her spectacles out of "Seged, Emperor of Ethiopia," and rubbing them gently with her pocket-handkerchief.

"And if it is, grandmamma, is it not correct? and is it not enough to make me dissatisfied and anxious?"

"Correct? that I cannot undertake rashly to affirm: I am inclined to doubt. In the first place, at seven years old, you were hardly as strong or as tall as you are now, and though at this moment, neither a Hercules in muscle nor a Goliath in height, you have enough of both, to be a steady support to your poor tottering grandmother, whenever the sun tempts or the church-bell invites her to leave her arm-chair. Secondly—"

"Grandmamma! you have so far proved me to be of as much use as a walking stick. I fear your *secondly* will hardly be as flattering."

"Secondly, my love," continued Lady Lovel, without noticing the interruption, "since you were seven years old, you have studied various arts, read numerous books,

become acquainted with a sufficient variety of persons to give you some insight into human character, and to make yourself true friends; all of which—"

"All of which, grandmamma, for any good use I make of it, might as well have been thrown away on old Flip."

"Are you in earnest, my love? you speak as if you were."

"I am in earnest, if ever I was in my life, grandmamma; but that is the worst of having a reputation for nonsense: no one will believe I can talk anything else."

"Prove that you can then, my love," said Lady Lovel smiling, and never mind what I may think of your last observation."

Julia threw down her work, and began walking up and down the room in great discontent. "I wish I was of some *use*, grandmamma."

"A very good wish, my dear; but what has made you think of it just now?"

"Oh, it is not the first time I have felt so; it has been often in my mind since I left school, but I had no opportunities, and no one to give me advice: and now when I see you all usefully employed, every one doing something, Jane slaving in the schools and among the poor, Mr. Revis up early and late always doing, and always ready to do; Mamma with her employments, and you with yours; and I only fit to read and work, and sing songs, write letters, and take them to the post: I feel quite disgusted with myself. And at this very time, too," continued Julia, her cheeks flushing, and her utterance becoming more rapid, "at this very moment, it may be, there are women, young women, delicate beings, unused to hardship, crossing stormy seas, or wild unknown countries, with the sun to scorch, and the winds to buffet them; and hunger and

thirst, and pain, and weariness, encompassing them on every side;—braving all for the good of mankind, for the salvation of the heathen, for the praise and glory of God! All this is going on, and more than this, and I am here, doing nothing!"

Lady Lovel looked at her anxiously, and seemed doubtful what reply to make. Julia went on without waiting for any. "What glorious women we read of in history, hear of by tradition, lay up in our hearts in ballad and romance! Women whose hearts were rock, whose spirits were fire, whom no adversity could crush, whom no difficulty could throw back; who kindled in the breasts of men the noble thoughts that renovate humanity; and taught the strong to endure, and the eloquent to speak, and the far sighted to judge, and the stout hearted to win battles; where are such women now? embroidering pocket-handkerchiefs, or netting purses, or making pincushions of oyster shells, or waste paper of good "cream laid;" screaming at the report of a gun, fainting if a horse runs away; with no courage, no heroism, no soaring genius; nothing that, if the French invaded us to-morrow, would be of any more use to refresh our slumbering patriotism, than their bodkins and knitting needles would be to spike the enemy's cannon! Oh to do something great! to be one of those star-like heroines, chronicled in history and loved by childhood, and whose very name is an omen of good success! Don't laugh at me, grandmamma, if you can help it, but this is what I have been thinking of, and unless you can give me some comforting advice, it will go on tormenting me, until I make myself a heroine for the sake of a quiet life!"

"Which no heroine ever had yet, to my knowledge,"

said Lady Lovel, with her gentle smile; "but do not think, my Julia, that because I am old, and subdued by the weight of my years, I can afford to laugh at young enthusiasm. I only differ with you in your way of looking at the business: I think you would find, on cool examination, that there are as many elements of heroism in the present age, as ever there were in the stirring times of Jeanne d'Arc, and Margaret of Anjou, or Queen Elizabeth herself; only—"

"Dearest grandmamma, Queen Elizabeth! do not bring her in, pray, among my heroic models! I would rather be a knitter and a spinner in the sun, all the days of my life, singing 'O dear, what can the matter be?' from Monday morning to Saturday night."

"My dear, she was a very great queen; and for courage, you will allow—"

"Anything—everything—but an heroic soul. Narrow-minded, selfish, hard of heart—"

"Well, my love, we will say no more about her, as you are so prejudiced: most young people think so, I know:—even Mr. Revis, who is so cautious in his judgments in most cases, spoke harshly and uncharitably of our great benefactress one day."

"I am delighted to hear it," said Julia, "but go on, dear grandmamma."

"I was only going to say, my love, that though these are not times in which you, or Jane Barnard, or Miss Eustace, are required to put on a military dress, and turn the Horse Guards upside down with self-taught tactics; yet heroism, as a moral quality, or combination of moral qualities, has as good a chance of flourishing under Queen Victoria, as under—I will not say Queen Elizabeth—but

any other queen you could name. I cannot myself think of heroism as merely consisting in a restless energy, and indifference to danger, which might drive a woman into scenes her cooler mood would shrink from:—nor can I limit the usefulness of the sex to their rarely required influence in the revolutions of the world. I would seek both the useful hand and the hero spirit in the quiet, unpretending, persevering, cheerful discharge of *duty*—plain, every day *duty*—for which no prize is held out, which no poet will condescend to sing: done because it is pleasing to the Lord, and because the good of others is dearer than selfish ease. The conscientious doer of the work set before her is *my* heroine, Julia, be that work what it may: whether the raising of the Oriflamme like your favourite Joan of Arc, or making old women's flannel petticoats, like your other favourite Jane Barnard.

" Duty! always duty!" repeated Julia, taking another impatient turn up and down the room: " dear grandmamma," stopping short before her table, " I ask it as you know, with all respect; but why is it that old people, I mean those who are wise and good like yourself, always hold up plain every-day *duty* to us young ones, as more glorious than honour, or fame, or love, or heroism? Did you think it so yourselves at our age? I know it is *right*, my reason tells me so: but it sounds so dull, and looks so cold beside those bright chivalrous scenes that are so delightful to read, and that make me long to have lived in the days of Ivanhoe, or to have been battled for by Quentin Durward. Don't think me very wicked, grandmamma."

" My dear child," said Lady Lovel, " if I think your feelings partake too strongly of the world's spirit, to be

right, it is only acknowledging your share of that sinfulness I lament in myself. You ask why we wise old ones preach 'duty first' to you, just in the morning of life. Shall I tell you why? It is because when we look back on our years, as a traveller from a hill upon the road he has passed over, on all the trials, the pleasures, the hopes, and fears, the dreams of imagination, the whirl of excitement (I do so often in wakeful nights:) it is only upon *duties fulfilled* that the memory can peacefully rest. And oh! how few they seem; how poor and weak their array of minutes, compared with the list of hours wasted or misapplied, or given up to sin! And then we old ones think, if any one could but have made us believe that a time would come when we should see things in this light, and deplore our folly in preferring the pleasures of a moment to the comfort of an existence, we should have been wise enough to manage differently; to give duty her due pre-eminence at once, and take care to provide a satisfactory retrospect for the refreshment of our last hours. And so in our zeal for our successors, and forgetting how much easier it is to give than to take advice, we bestow the fruits of our experience—often alas! in vain, and tell our young hearers (listeners I cannot always call them) that the real enjoyment of life is in diligently serving the Lord. Believe it not, as you will; forget it in the clamour of dissipation, or bury it beneath the adornings of romance, which appears to be your greatest danger: the truth alters not; it cannot alter; there is the road to happiness and peace, and no where else can they be found."

"I do believe it, grandmamma; from my soul I believe it: and I know enough of the comfort of God's

presence to make me wish for more, and to try for it, sometimes," said Julia, colouring deeply; "but then—oh! then come the straying thoughts, they will stray: and I have such a passion you know, for chivalry and adventure, and war and heroic deeds; I feel it would be so much easier to win heaven by crusading or pilgrimage, than by being quietly and rationally religious at home."

Lady Lovel did her best not to smile. "You are only seventeen yet, my Julia, and a few years will make a great difference in your view of life: the enchantment of romance will fade before reality, and you will see its emptiness, and wonder it ever charmed. And then, I trust, you will not, like the men of this world, sigh over 'those blessed delusions,' and wish you could recall your belief in the durability and preciousness of earthly things; but have your heart and imagination so well stored with hopes and visions, and bright earnests of eternal peace and glory, as to make you remember your former mistakes but as the weakness of childish error. But this must depend on your conduct now: on your determination by God's grace to follow what is good and useful; to deny your imagination those fascinating images that blind it to the truth; to conquer your disposition to dream instead of work, and set yourself diligently, whatsoever your hand findeth to do, to do it with your might, giving your heart in its bloom to God, and, as old Bunyan says, making your last day your company-keeper."

At this moment Sir John's voice was heard at the foot of the stairs, shouting for his daughter to descend. "How unfortunate!" said Julia, "just as I had so many things to say to you, grandmamma! what is to be done?"

"Duty, of course, my love; let what will be your

pursuit, your father must be attended to, and that with cheerful promptness: so run down at once, and put one of your good resolves in practice."

When Julia entered the library, she was surprised to find there her father and Mr. Revis, laying their heads as close as possible together over a heap of papers: pen and ink stood in readiness, but the Rector's right hand was still in its sling; and it was to obtain an amanuensis he had come.

"Julia, my girl!" cried Sir John, "you must be useful now you are come home. Here is Mr. Revis wanting help, and mamma is out, and I am too stupid, or too blind, or something. You are quick at accounts, I dare say: here is some nice amusement for you."

Now if there was one thing Julia detested more than Queen Elizabeth and Oliver Cromwell, it was casting up accounts, and in spite of her ready assent, a glance of consternation caught the quick eye of Lionel. "It is too much to expect a young lady to be fond of such an occupation for its own sake," he said, courteously, "but the pleasure of benevolence may perhaps repay the exertion. You see how disabled I still am, Miss Seymour; and my friend, Mr. Barnard, is nowhere to be found, and all this business is calling shame upon me for its delay. Lady Seymour is well acquainted with the whole affair, which induced me to seek assistance here, but I find she is driving out."

"Yes, gone to pay her call on Miss Eustace," said Julia, who, it may just be observed would have accompanied her, but for leaving her grandmamma alone; "but do not apologise, Mr. Revis: I am too happy to be useful; only Papa made a small mistake in saying I am quick at accounts, for I am both stupid and slow."

"Don't believe her," said Sir John, retreating to a favourite arm chair, newspaper in hand: "she is too like her father to be either one or the other. There, talk your Tare and Tret as loud as you please: you will not interrupt me, for I shall not listen to you."

Down sat Julia to her unwelcome occupation with as good a grace as she could muster, and while she was arranging blotting paper, and nibbing pens, Lionel began explaining:—there were these accounts to be reckoned, and this statement to be copied, and this little calculation to be made, and these forms to be filled up; and Julia tried to understand with all her might, and secretly admiring the coincidence of her good resolves with her sudden call into office, began, as she flattered herself, in a most satisfactory manner. But she did not proceed very far, with those hawk-like eyes watching every stroke, and calculating much faster than her pen could write. "I beg your pardon, Miss Seymour; is that quite correct? I made it out two shillings more." Julia went over it again: it was as he said, and she altered it without giving more than one quiet stamp under the table. This happened twice: Lionel detecting the errors as fast as they were made, which though it saved time, by no means diminished the flurry of Julia's nerves. The "little calculation" too, gave her much trouble: the statement to be copied was in a crabbed handwriting that it was almost impossible to read; Mr. Revis could not make it all out himself, which was a great consolation; and worst of all, there was an estimate, scrawled on a slate by the builder at Myrton, whom he had met accidentally, on the probable expense of rebuilding the burnt cottages. The deciphering of this was so provokingly troublesome, Julia at last threw her pen down, and declared she could not

do it: she knew she was very stupid, and she had said so at the first: she was sure Mr. Revis must be quite tired of her stupidity: she saw by his face how impatient he was growing. "Are you famous for perseverance, my dear Miss Seymour?" asked Lionel, with a look of comic gravity.

"I never had any in my life, Mr. Revis."

"Neither had I ever any patience: yet I have always heard patience and perseverance are necessary to conquer difficulties; and I am sure they are so here: what is to be done?" Julia could not help laughing at the expression of his face. "A thought occurs to me," said he; "suppose we both make an heroic effort; you to persevere, and I to be patient? we shall then kill four birds with two stones, and benefit ourselves as well as our neighbours. Will you make the experiment?"

"I will," said Julia, cheerfully," but on one condition, Mr. Revis; that you take a book, and sit with your back to me; for while you watch my pen, it goes wrong of itself for sheer nervousness."

"As you please," said he, walking away, his eye being attracted by two volumes in brilliant binding, bearing the title "Cæsar's Commentaries;" an edition he had never met with before. His natural impulse was to take down Vol. 1st. but to his surprise Vol. 2nd. followed its colleague so hastily as to scatter the contents on the carpet; being no less than a couple of diceboxes, and divers counters, both black and white, "Ay, ay!" cried Sir John, looking from behind his newspaper, "taken in the scholar, hey? My idea that; something quite new; Cæsar's Commentary on the Rubicon: *the die is cast:* epigrammatic, I flatter myself, hey? Don't look so disgusted,

man: it is a book that will make more noise than *your* Commentary, I'll be bound. There, pick up all you have upset; you must give Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, you know."

"I do know, Sir John," said Lionel, in the quiet tone of rebuke peculiar to himself, "and also that we must render to God the things that be God's, among which, you will agree with me, we must include the words of Scripture."

"Quite right, quite right, my dear sir," said Sir John, his rosy face growing scarlet, "I am too careless with my tongue, I know; I beg your pardon. Julia! come and help Mr. Revis."

"Not for the world," interrupted Lionel, good humouredly, "Miss Seymour is keeping her share of the covenant, and I must keep mine. I have repaired all the mischief." And he replaced the backgammon board with an air of indignation that mightily amused Sir John; then took up a volume at random, and sat down to the perusal, though more to keep himself quiet according to promise, than from any great curiosity as to the contents. And a silence came over the room, broken only by the scratching of Julia's pen, and the rustle of her father's newspaper, for the space of three quarters of an hour. At the end of that time, Julia started gaily from her seat. "Victory at last, Mr. Revis! you may look now as much as you please!" He made no answer: she came behind his chair, and spoke close to his ear, and the start he gave was too genuine to be mistaken. "I beg your pardon, Miss Seymour! have you really finished already? I am very much obliged to you for your zeal and perseverance."

"I am no less obliged to you," said Julia, "for per-

suading me to persevere, and giving me an opportunity of being useful. Now I find that I can be of service, which I very much doubted before, I shall venture to offer my assistance again."

"And I have also to thank you," continued Lionel, laying down his book, "for a lesson in patience, and energy, and holy simplicity, and fervour and zeal, rarely equalled in the annals of ministerial labour. I have never read such a character as this, nor could I have believed it true, but that with God nothing is impossible."

"Oberlin's Memoirs!" said Julia, looking at the volume in surprise, "do you know, Mr. Revis, that is about the last book I should have guessed would please you."

"May I ask why?"

"It is not learned enough; or difficult enough: too simple and matter of fact, in short..I hope I am saying nothing impertinent."

"I am afraid you are," said Lionel, laughing, "and I am sorry you have such an opinion of my dignity. You will find I can be as matter of fact as anybody, when necessary; and to prove it, do you really wish to be useful?"

"Most heartily; as grandmamma could tell you."

"Then you shall not want opportunity: there is plenty of work to be done, and Miss Barnard has scarcely strength for the fatigue she imposes on herself. But, Miss Seymour, if you do undertake anything, will it be done, as this has been, in the spirit of perseverance?"

"I hope so," said Julia, a little conscience stricken.

"And will you allow me also to hope, that you will consider usefulness to mean the glorifying of our Lord's name, by the increase of the number of His children? that you will think of the soul more than of the body, and

try to make others love your Redeemer by telling them what He has done for you?"

Julia was silent: Sir John, who had listened attentively to the conversation, thought it time to interpose. "Do you mean, Mr. Revis, that you approve of young girls like my daughter holding forth like Methodist preachers wherever they give away a blanket or a basin of soup? if you do, we differ very considerably."

"I would have no one step out of her sphere, sir," replied the Rector, gently, "and a young lady least of all; but her gifts and her kindness are not likely to be less welcome to the poor folks from her showing an anxiety for their eternal good. It is not preaching that is required: we will undertake that part of the business: but if usefulness is the object, it can be attained but in one way—in setting the Lord always before us, and doing everything as in His sight."

All the time he spoke, he was collecting his papers, sorting with methodical care, and securing them as well as he could with those modern inventions so inestimable to people who can never find tape or string, known by the name of elastic bands. Sir John looked at his daughter, with a half serious, half comic expression: he was so unused to hear conversation of this kind from any one but Lady Lovel, that he was at a loss what to say or do: Lionel's manner puzzled him; it was so simple, and cool, as if he really meant what he said as a matter of course, that the Baronet's joke died away on his lips, and it was a relief to his feelings when his wife entered the room. "Come in, my dear," he said, rubbing his hands, "you have been wanted sadly, but Julia has done her best to fill your place, and Mr. Revis is so well satisfied with her

capacity, he means to install her as lay assistant in the parish."

"Really?" said Lady Seymour, looking sharply from one to the other, "this is quite a new *fureur de besogne*, Julia! what is it all about?"

"Only, Mamma," said Julia, blushing, "that Mr. Revis wanted a scribe, and has promised to find me opportunities of doing something among the poor people."

"Humph!" said Lady Seymour, sarcastically; "and what does Mr. Revis think you fit for?"

"What all young people are designed for," replied Lionel, "the glory of God, and the good of their fellow-creatures."

"Come," thought Lady Seymour, "he does not flatter her, so there is not much harm done. You will dine with us to-day, Mr. Revis?" He thanked her, but he had dined long ago, and was very much occupied. "By the way," said Lady Seymour, suddenly, "can any one tell me what took Mrs. Barnard to Eustace Hall to-day? We have all a right to know what our neighbours do, and my curiosity is strongly excited. Can you enlighten it, Mr. Revis?"

"I can only share it, Lady Seymour: if any one could inform me where her husband is, it would suit my purpose much better."

"If you wish to know, he is gone twenty miles off with the young ladies, per train, to spend the day. I should like to be your curate, Mr. Revis. It is a nice easy life."

"I should doubt that," said Sir John, with a shake of the head. "I never knew you so full of gossip before, my dear."

"You never saw me before in so uncharitable a hu-

mour, perhaps. But I have reason to be so. Yes, Mr. Revis may look as grave as he pleases—I maintain my right to be misanthropical for full half an hour, to make amends for the penance I have just endured."

"Penance, dear mamma?" cried Julia, "at Eustace Hall?"

"Yes, the penance of making one in a party, which appeared about as sociable and happy as a picnic on the top of Vesuvius would be, just when an explosion was expected. The crater gave two or three strong puffs while I was there, smelling most decidedly of brimstone: the lava must be running down red hot by this time."

"Poor Miss Eustace!" said Julia.

"Yes, she is much to be pitied—Andromeda *bien parée*,—you do not actually see the chains or the rock, or the teeth of the dragon, but there they are beyond possibility of mistake. Nothing she said, looked, thought, as far as they could tell, gave satisfaction; first it was my lord found fault, with all the mildness of Harry the Eighth: then Mrs. Hargrave set her right with all the benevolence of Olivier le Dain; and when they had effectually silenced her between them, then complained to me of her low spirits. Low spirits! I longed to reply, that none but a hyæna could laugh in such a gloomy atmosphere, as they contrived to collect in those beautiful rooms. They have been newly fitted up, and are really magnificent. You must call very soon, Mr. Revis: the pictures are worth the trouble, and Miss Eustace is one herself."

"I intend doing so, but not merely to see the pictures: I have no time for visits of mere curiosity," said Lionel, as he took up his hat to depart.

"Then you are never to pay any that are not inquisi-

torial and domiciliary, not to say, mendacious, Mr. Revis? I am afraid you will scarcely be welcome at the Hall on such terms," said Lady Seymour.

"That I cannot help:" said Lionel, smiling, "I cannot wear two characters to please Lord Eustace."

"All very fine," observed Lady Seymour, as the door closed upon the Rector, "but not so easily acted up to, my dear Sir. I dare say he means what he says, but time will show."

"Show what, dear mamma?"

"Whether all this religious profession is sincere, my love. If he is afraid of doing at the hall what he does here, or of saying to Lord Eustace what he says to us, or truckles to greatness in the smallest degree; I would not give much for his religion. You see how he behaves among ourselves, where he is intimate: he is father confessor all round, and if he spends the evening with us, generally remains till prayer time, and explains the Scripture to the servants: all very right, and no one enjoys it more than I do: but then it must be the same with everybody. If he talks religiously to me, and gives you lectures on industry (very necessary, I am sure) and then bows before Lord Eustace's worldly principles, or plays the courtier to his daughter's fashion and beauty, I can only say, such religion is not worth having."

"Can you doubt his sincerity, mamma?"

"Only as I doubt every one's, but your own, Julia: he certainly professes a good deal, and it will require matchless consistency to act up to it," said Lady Seymour, turning to the table to write a letter.

"Not that pen, mamma; I tried to mend it, so you may guess it is not good for much now," said Julia, and

as she stooped over the inkstand for another, added with unconscious earnestness, " If ever a face bore the stamp of sincerity, it is that of Mr. Revis."

Both ladies started at the same moment:—there he was close behind them: he had dropped some of his papers at the door, thanks to his lefthanded condition, and when recovering them, had recollected his wish to borrow Oberlin's Memoirs. " Better borrow Cæsar, my good friend," said Sir John, looking slyly round his newspaper, " and another time, don't come back till we have done discussing your merits."

Lionel smiled,—a bright benevolent smile, that gave a peculiar beauty to his countenance, and amply justified Julia's testimony: his eyes turned on her mother, as he took up his favourite volume, with a clear and honest steadiness, before which, Lady Seymour's fell. Not a word more passed: he made his bow, and was gone before they had recovered their surprise.

" Did he hear us, mamma? " said Julia, as soon as she was sure he was gone.

" I cannot help it if he did, returned her ladyship, who was much more annoyed than she chose to confess, " I said nothing but the truth, and if it puts him on his guard, so much the better. Listeners never hear good of themselves. Let it be a lesson to you, Julia, how you speak of your neighbours. It is a bad practice at best: I hope he is not affronted, but I cannot help it if he is. It does not signify the least, but I should like to know how much he heard."

It was not much that he did hear: not enough to affront his kindly nature, only to give it a pang. Hard it appeared that his sincerity should be doubted, and that

the bright, glowing face that had been turned on him in such perfect confidence, should be shadowed with a suggestion that he was only acting a pious part: but he felt no offence, for he knew none was intended: and though they wronged him who deemed him insincere, yet they might be justified in so deeming, if his life was not consistent with his profession. And a long, deep search into his own heart, engaged his attention during his walk to a distant hamlet, on the borders of his wide parish. He probed it unflinchingly—examined it in every light, and humble as was his view of his own attainments, he came to the conclusion that he might fairly hope he was sincere. "Why should I not be?" thought Lionel, as he paused beneath the shade of an old tree, in a spot as silent and lonely, as if no foot but the wild rabbit's had ever bounded through the fern and gorse, "why should I not be sincere? Every one around me is in earnest in their work: the wealthy land-owner in his improvements, or his sport: the tradesman at his counter: the labourer at his plough: the physician with his patients: the lawyer with his deeds: the general with his campaigns: who doubts their being in earnest? Why should they doubt us—the labourers for eternity—charged with the safety of souls—living among death-beds, and funerals, and warnings, and spiritual remembrances, till it is impossible to forget for a moment the terrible responsibility that at times would almost crush us to the earth? It is not that they really doubt my integrity: I suppose my assertion would pass current as readily as another's; no, it is because I press realities upon them, realities they respect but shrink from—believe in, yet forget. Amiable, talented, kind hearted, they have all some qualities for which I must love them; I might have searched all the parishes in England and

not met kinder friends; but the root of the matter; the mainspring of action; the abiding sense of God's presence and love; with whom shall I find it manifest? Let me talk to them on any other subject; to the gentlemen of their pursuits and politics; to the ladies of their books and children; to the old of their health or experience; to the young of their play and their gardens; answers come readily enough, and conversation flows like a stream: but name the name of Christ; point out the finger of Providence; lay a searching question to the hearer's conscience —and they are dumb! Countenances change; all look grave and constrained, wishing it had not been begun, and hoping it will soon be over; and the dullest remark is hailed as a blessing, if it will only give the conversation a more agreeable turn. There is no life in the place; no warmth, no fervour; but an ensnaring spirit of easy, sprightly indifference, which if it once seize on the soul, unfits it for every great work. And I am to stand up against all this; and alone, and without age and experience to assist me, am to bring among these forgetful people the remembrance of their probationary state! So be it then, since it is not my strength in which I must work: so be it, heavenly Father, if thou art ever with me, to give me the spirit of wisdom, and a tongue to make known thy praise!"

The noise of angry voices behind the hedge, became at this moment so distinct, as to rouse Mr. Revis from his musings, and he was quickly in the midst of a group of village boys, surrounding a football, and quarrelling over it with all their might. The sudden appearance of the Rector had its effect, and the circle opened in silent surprise to admit him. "Why, boys!" said Lionel, good

humouredly, "what's all this? On a fine summer's afternoon, to be playing like so many little girls, at cross questions, and crooked answers? When I was at school, we should have called any fellow a Betty, who stopped playing football for anything but just to get breath for a minute! what's the matter?" Several voices began at once. "Please, sir, Dick don't play fair." "I do, please sir, but Tom kicked me." "He didn't." "He did." "Well, you called him names." "Called names?" repeated Lionel, "that is a dreadful thing to bear, I know. I was called a name myself when I went to school: and I will give sixpence to the first boy who can guess what it was."

There was a general grin, and much jogging of elbows, and some laughing which was not meant to be seen; but Lionel saw it, and it was just what he wanted.

"Laughing? why, boys, I am surprised at you. Here is a serious quarrel to be patched up, and you all begin to laugh! Then, I tell you what; I only see one round head among you that behaves quietly and well; and if it has not much in it, that little will go farther in a minute than all the rest in an hour, and that is this!" giving the foot-ball a most energetic kick, that sent it away like a bullet amid the shouts of the boys; who burst in pursuit, till the air rang again with their peals of merriment: and the quarrel was forgotten as if it had never been.

"If one could reconcile grown up children in the same way," thought the Rector, as he walked quietly on, "the law and the army would have an easy life of it. But these village Montagues and Capulets," looking at the cottages he was approaching, "are of sterner stuff; though disputing about less trifles than the boys' foot-ball; I wish

they may give me opportunity for just such another kick."

"I thought you was never a comin' again," was the first ungracious observation that greeted Lionel's entrance. The speaker was a lame man of about sixty, with a querulous expression that was extended to his voice and manner. "You always say you're a comin', and you're a comin'; but everybody gets attended to, before us; it's always the way."

"Then you are very sorry to see me?" said Lionel, as he took a chair; "that is unfortunate, for now I am come, I mean to stay. And how are you to-day, my good friend?"

"Ah well, I'm dreadful bad; but nobody cares, I dare say: out of sight, out of mind, all the world over."

"What a blessing it is, then, Thomas, that there is one Friend from whom we are never out of sight, and therefore never out of mind!"

"Ay, ay, that's what the rich folks say; Trust to Providence, they say, trust to Providence; and then give us nothing!"

"And suppose I were to say to you, 'Thomas, don't trust to Providence any more, there's a shilling for you, trust to *that;*' what would you think then?"

"Well, I should like your present better than your doctrine, I must say."

"I should hope you would; come, you shall not say I have forgotten you this time," said Lionel, drawing from his pockets two or three small parcels; the making up whereof had not been effected without some resistance on the part of Marian Mayflower. "Is your wife at home? for the mistress is the person to take care of these good things."

"You han't got no missis at home yet yourself?" enquired the old man, sharply, showing no further sign of gratitude or pleasure than a nod of the head, and a twinkle in his dull eye.

"No, Thomas: you are richer than I am in that respect."

"I don't know what to say as to that: a wife's all very well; but they tease one's life out sometimes: children too. There's that girl of mine, Nelly—I don't know what to do with her."

"I am sorry to hear you say so. Is she ill?"

"Nay, nay, not to speak on; but she frets: and what for, do you think, of all things in the world?"

Lionel guessed—but he took care it should be inwardly.

"Why, just for young Phil Lee, over the way; a pretty thing, arn't it? That I should live to see a lass of mine demean herself to think about a Lee!"

The Lees and the Dennets were in fact the Montague and Capulet of whom the Rector had been thinking as he entered, and this was not the first intimation he had received of the further resemblance to the old story. His own sympathies being much more on the side of young love than of old enmity, he discreetly held his peace, and only shook his head. Old Dennet having now got on his favourite theme, went on with increased asperity: the Lees had always been his enemies, man and boy, and his father's before him; and would be to the end of the chapter: they were always insulting and injuring them;—he couldn't keep a flower or a bit of fruit in his garden but their children stole them; nor a dog or cat but they did 'em mischief: they made game of his lameness too, just as if it warn't pain and misery enough in itself.—"Ah,

you people with all your limbs safe and sound, little know what I have to bear." His eye as he spoke, fell on Lionel's sling. "Why, what's come to your arm, master?"

"No great harm, Thomas: only a trifling inconvenience, that may serve to make me more feeling for others." Thomas was about to ask for more particulars, when his wife came in, and more observant than her lord, instantly exclaimed, "Save us, Mr. Revis! and have you broken your arm?"

"Only burnt my hand, Mrs. Dennet, which compels me to offer you my left," said the Rector, extending the sound member with a smile. The woman took it with unusual reverence. "Sure, we heard about the fire, didn't we, Tom? and how wonderful brave you were; Miss Barnard told us, and about Betty Plowden's twins, and old Reynolds, and some other poor body whom nobody knew, who was nearly your death. It was grand to look at, they say; I'd like to have been there to see."

"Well, Mrs. Dennet, you have only to set your thatch a-light some evening; and if I know of it, I will not fail to come and do my best."

"I believe you, bless your goodness, that I do; you wouldn't see any of us in trouble, without giving us a hand somehow: would he, Thomas, lad?" Thomas thus a second time appealed to, grumbled out a reluctant "Ah!"

"I was not the only one who was of use that evening," said Lionel, "great help was afforded me by one of your neighbours who behaved with great spirit, I assure you."

"And who was that? lor, we didn't hear of that!" cried Mrs. Dennet, and even Thomas looked curious.

"It was young Lee," said the Rector, drily.

"Young Lee? Philip Lee?" repeated the woman,

glancing hurriedly into the next room, where a slight sound was audible, as from an interested listener. "Well, we hadn't heard of it: and so you've brought all these good things for my poor man, sir; it's very kind of you, so brave and so generous as you are, I'm sure I don't know what we should do without you—" she stopped before the keen glance of Lionel's eye.

"Shall I tell you what you would do?" he said: "you would have another minister and serve him as you do me; praise him to his face, and approve of all he says, and yet never give him the happiness of seeing you follow his advice."

"Lor, sir! don't talk like that!"

"Is it not true, Mrs. Dennet? have I not again and again asked you to come to church, and did I not arrange about the cart to save you the long walk, and yet do I not miss you Sunday after Sunday, whom I should be so glad to welcome in the House of God?"

"Well, sir, sure enough we haven't been lately; but then, you see, old Mrs. Lee, she would go too, and she thinks us lost creatures, and she talked and she talked, and it was all like a book, and Thomas said he'd rather stay at home all his days than ride with her or any of 'em; and so there you have the truth, sir."

"Well, but this is rather awkward," said the Rector good humouredly, "for I have not two churches, one for you, and one for the Lees: neither can I preach two sermons at once, and if you cannot endure their company for a little while on Sunday mornings, I do not see what is to be done. I must not bring my friend Philip to help me when your cottage is on fire, I see; as you would rather be burnt than let him pull you out as he did poor Jacob Reynolds, when the blazing thatch was falling about his hair."

"I tell you what, Mr. Revis," said the old man, half raising himself in his chair, and turning almost fiercely round upon his visitor, "fire is an awful thing, and a daughter's a precious one, but I'd rather see my Nelly burnt, than saved to be the wife of Philip Lee!"

He struck his fist on the table as he spoke, and a burst of sobs from the inner room again fell on the Rector's ear. He made no reply, but slowly and gravely opened his pocket Bible, and arresting immediate attention by his impressive manner, read of the Saviour's love and mercy and forbearance; and explained and enforced as he read: and the fascination of his musical voice and graceful language, acted like the harp of David on the dark spirit of his king. The sullen determination with which the old man listened at first, he vainly tried to maintain; he was dealing with one who knew his power, and who thought it as well worth while to win audience close from two old people in a little dark cottage, as when preaching to hundreds of well dressed and well educated admirers, in the handsome churches of London. His heart was full, and his voice grew more and more earnest in showing the difference between the example of Christ and the conduct of Christians; the preciousness of religion, and the indifference with which it was treated; the blessedness of being at peace with God and man, and the misery brought on by uncharitableness and angry feeling; and when he judged their hearts were touched, knelt and prayed with them that they and all might be made one in the Redeemer, through the love-breathing presence of the Spirit of God. Just as he was taking leave, the figure of a boy climbing into their garden caught Mrs. Dennet's eye; "Now there, sir, only look; that is what we have to bear; isn't it hard?" Thomas looked, and saw the urchin

picking fruit as fast as he could. He gave a long "Ah!" and turned his head away. "I don't think its one of *them*," he said hesitatingly; "I don't think it is, missis; at ony rate don't seem to notice: it don't matter. I don't think it's one of the Lees."

Lionel's grasp of his hand was hearty, and showed the effort was appreciated, and he left the cottage with a feeling of hope that his presence had done some good, even if only temporary.

For two hours was he employed in this arduous work, going in and out of the cottages, enduring every variety of reception, and striving by all his powers of persuasion and argument, to kindle in cold, indifferent hearts the warmth of faith he knew to be indispensable. Oh! the heaviness of such labour! the depression that will weigh down the spirit, when, say what you will, do what you may, ears continue dull, and countenances vacant, and you have only to choose between manifest weariness and hypocritical assent: what strength, what faith, what spiritual life within is necessary, to triumph over obstacles like this? Purposely had the Bishop chosen this sphere of action for his gifted nephew: laying work upon him that must be done in secret, without the flattering approbation of hushed crowds, to spur him on to fresh exertion: and never was any one more fitted for the task. Of course in many instances the effect would be most likely, momentary; but every where as he passed, some trace of his influence remained behind: people's hearts had received a glow to which they had long been strangers; his voice still rang sweetly in their ears, and his smile won its way like Napoleon's, with those whom his arguments could not reach. "What a nice gentleman to speak to! and what a wonderful

Scripture scholar!" was the ejaculation of the elders, "and what a kind look and noble face he has!" thought to themselves the younger; for the young are alike in all ranks, and among them Lionel's person often hindered their attending as they should to his precepts. One thing gave him dissatisfaction in two or three instances: complaints were made about Mr. and Mrs. Barnard; promises had not been kept; wants had not been listened to; if he came, it was always in such a hurry, and if they went to him, they could get no attention, unless they saw Miss Jane, who was always good. "Promise me," said one shrewd old woman, laying both her shrivelled hands on Lionel's arm, "promise me, when the Lord takes me, you'll bury me yourself; don't leave me to Mr. Barnard, he'll put me off, and put me off, and at last he'll send Miss Jane." Lionel promised good humouredly, but the sarcasm grated on his ear; and when in the next house he heard murmurs against the Miss Bellamys, who employed poor folks night and day getting up their fine things, and didn't pay; and that they were so proud and scornful when they spoke, not a bit like Miss Seymour or my lady, he shook his head, an invariable sign of some inward resolution. It would be too distressing to reprove his fellow-labourer, so much his senior; a hint to him might suffice: but the young ladies, they must hear the truth: it was their duty to see to the poor, and they must be exhorted to perform it. And a thought passed through his mind that if he had but a wife, he should need no other assistant: such a wife as he pictured to himself would be at once the guardian angel of his home and his parish, sharing his labour and sweetening his rest, as none but a woman could: he nearly caught himself about to sigh,

and felt much more indignant with the weakness than, all things considered, there was any occasion for. His last visit was to the Lees: Mrs. Lee was knitting, and Philip grinding tools; both spoke welcome, but their flushed faces showed the excitement of recent discussion; and the mother began abruptly—"You've had a busy afternoon, sir, I fancy, among our poor neighbours: I hope it will be a profitable one to them, poor benighted creatures!"

"I trust it may, Mrs. Lee," said Lionel, "but it can only be so through God's blessing."

"True, sir, true; I was just a saying so to Philip; it's sadly they want instruction, and nothing short of a miracle can make 'em better. I'm set here like a light in a dark place, I may say, or like Lot in Sodom: surrounded by wickedness, and no one here but myself to do a turn to make 'm better."

"No one but yourself, Mrs. Lee?" said the Rector, "nay, I pity you indeed. I should never think of venturing on such a task alone."

Philip looked up from his work for a minute with a half smile that provoked his mother. "Ah yes," she said, in a somewhat peevish tone, "you can keep a curate, and have the ladies to assist you, and all that: but I must do as I can, for my son is no help to me, though I tell him over and over again how much he might do."

"I do keep a curate, and the ladies do assist me," returned Lionel, "but unless we have the assistance of God on the work, we are alone indeed, whoever may help besides."

Mrs. Lee stooped over her knitting, and dropped more stitches than a less experienced person could have picked

up in a hurry, for Mr. Revis's eye was full upon her, with an expression that it was not very easy to endure. After a little while she began again, though in a less exalted tone than before. "I am sure I do *my* best, poor as it is; I exhorted that poor creature, Thomas Dennet, all the way from my own door to the church, the last time as Tim's cart took us; but he hardened his heart, and stopped his ear, and has never been there since. Ah sir, from first to last, *there's* an ungodly race for you!"

Philip started up. "I can't bear it, mother! I told you I couldn't, and I wouldn't; so stop!" "Gently, Philip!" said Lionel Revis: the young man reddened deeply, and sat down again, turning over his tools without the least knowing what he was about. The Rector then turned to Mrs. Lee, and quietly asked why her children had not been at school lately. "Well, really, sir, to tell you the truth, they do mix so with other children, and one thing and another; it isn't as if they hadn't great advantages at home:—I hope I may say I've taught them well; I've done my duty by them, and I can do no more. There isn't a Commandment they can't repeat, and keep too, I hope." Lionel expressed a wish to try their proficiency, and Willy and Bobby were summoned from the garden, and desired to repeat their duty to their neighbour, which, after some demur, they did, as rapidly as it was possible for the words to come out of their lips: Mrs. Lee listening with much complacency, as who should say "I defy any National or Sunday schoolmistress to teach the children better than *that*." "Well done, boys!" she said, when they stopped, "you are good children, and shall have sugar on your bread and butter to-night, if you keep out of mischief till supper time."

"Willy!" said Mr. Revis, "what is that you have just been repeating?"

"Please, sir, my duty to my neighbour."

"Who is your neighbour, Willy?"

"Please, sir, we've a many neighbours."

"Are the people opposite your neighbours?"

"Yes, sir."

"How much fruit did you steal from his garden about an hour and a half ago?"

Willy looked aghast. "Steal, sir," cried Mrs. Lee, "my boy steal? you're wrong, Mr. Revis: I beg your pardon, sir; but there aint a child of mine as would touch a crumb that didn't belong to him—would you, Willy?" But the piercing eye of the Rector was on Willy, and he could only sob. Bobby, as amiable children are apt to do, made his cause as bad as he could immediately.

"Willy is always taking old Dennet's fruit; I told him not, but he would."

"Do not come near me, Bobby," said Lionel, suddenly drawing his chair back; "I have hurt my arm, and cannot use it, and I should not like to be mimicked and laughed at for my misfortune."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Mrs. Lee, now crimson with anger, "but I never knew Robert disrespectful to you or any gentleman in his life."

"He has never seen me before in a maimed state," said Lionel, still looking full at Bobby, who understood him but too well, "and as he thinks it very clever to make fun of other people's helplessness, I suppose he will serve me as he did poor old Dennet this afternoon, when I saw him limping past his window in mockery of his affliction."

Both the boys were now in tears, and Mrs. Lee seemed choking with vexation. "I see how it is, sir," she said, "you have been sitting with the Dennets, and they have been telling you all manner of tales against me and mine: it's hard, I must say, to be spoken against by such godless creatures, and have my poor children found fault with for trifles, just to please them."

"I only took a few currants," sobbed Willy, finding himself supported by his mother, "but old Tom is always so cross."

"Willy," said the Rector, laying his hand on his head, "I was in the room when you climbed the wall, and old Tom saw you, but he turned his head away, and tried to believe it was not you, and said it didn't matter. It is a hard thing, Willy, to be old, and lame, and feeble; his life is not so happy as yours, who can run about, and play, and work in your garden, and enjoy yourself; he has many a long, weary hour to make him cross; and I had been trying to comfort him with God's word, and thoughts of heaven, and he *was* comforted, and felt ready to be friends with his neighbours if they would let him; and then, the first thing he saw was you, Willy, taking advantage of his being old and lame to steal his fruit!"

Willy cried bitterly at this, and Bobby, who felt his turn was next, made a rush for the door, but Lionel was too quick for him. "I have only this to say to you both," he continued, with a quiet severity that cut them to the quick, "to be boys of *mine*, to belong to me, and be loved by me, as my children all feel they are, you must behave very differently from this. My boys must be brave, not cowardly; they must be honest and true, not thieves; they must help and respect old age, not ill-treat

or make game of it: they must try by God's help, to *do* their duty to their neighbour, as well as to learn it by heart. Do you wish to be boys of mine?" No answer. "Will you try and leave off these cowardly tricks, and ask God's pardon, and help to do better?"

"They always say their prayers, night and morning," put in Mrs. Lee, indignantly; "there, run away, boys, to play; and mind what Mr. Revis says to you, and be good."

The boys were ready enough to go, but lingered near the door as they made their bows, in hopes of his usual smiling nod; his look, however, was inexorably grave, and they went off with a weight on their hearts, that nobody else could have laid there. Lionel stayed a short time longer with Mrs. Lee, endeavouring to convince her of her grievous mistake, but to no purpose: she was so perfectly satisfied with all she had done and said, it seemed presumption in her minister to find fault with her; and she gave two or three broad hints about youth and inexperience, that tried his patience more than anything. He passed it over however, only warning her how she cast hindrances in the way of others, the most terrible error a Christian can commit.

"Remember," he said, as he took leave, "if you profess to be a follower of the Lord, and to teach others so; and yet in your life and conversation set them against it, the fault will be laid upon your religion; those who might have loved will hate it; those you might have won, you will harden; and through your pride, or your uncharitableness, or your angry temper, you may be the cause that a weak brother perishes, for whom your Redeemer died." And thus he quitted her, awed by his words, and still more by his voice and look.

Philip Lee had left the room while the discussion took place, but not from weariness of the Rector's society, for before he had placed two fields between him and the hamlet, Lionel found him by his side. Surprised at his sudden appearance, and the embarrassment of his manner, he spoke to him in friendly terms, and was moving on, when Philip in a hurried tone, begged just to speak to him. "It's not about the boys, sir; it's about myself—and—and somebody else: I'm just in great trouble, sir; and it would be a great comfort to get your advice, if I might be so bold."

"My advice you are welcome to, Lee, if you will tell me at once what is the matter, but I am rather pressed for time."

"Then it's just this, sir;—you know the Dennets over the way."

"So do you, Philip, I find;" said Lionel, at once understanding what all this confusion meant, "especially Ellen."

"There, sir, now you've said it, and saved me a deal of explaining. It's just that I wanted to speak to you about."

"So I supposed," said Lionel, smiling, "but what can I do in such a case? I am afraid the Dennets are not well disposed towards you, Philip, and considering how they are provoked, it is not much to be wondered at."

"Isn't it so, Mr. Revis? and isn't it cruel to bear? and don't I try night and day to keep the peace, and can't, and am nearly beside myself at times to see how everything and everybody are against me? *I* don't want to quarrel, nor does Nelly: we love each other, and would be too happy to be allowed to be together, and all friends;

but because our fathers and mothers can't agree, we must be kept apart, and made miserable: I do say it's cruel, and hard to bear, and that's what it is."

"It *is* hard to bear," said Lionel, kindly, "and so are all the troubles of life, Philip; but they are all in our Master's hands to do us good."

"I dare say, sir, I dare say," said poor Philip, looking anything but resigned, "its all very true, to be sure; and I could bear it for myself, but for her—" his countenance changed suddenly: Mr. Revis followed the glance of his eye, and comprehended it at once, when he perceived a young girl in the act of filling her pitcher at the brook they were approaching: no painter need have sought a fairer study than her position and attitude, in the soft light of the shaded sunshine; as, unconscious who were watching her, she raised the pitcher full of clear water, and brushed away the drops on the outside, and shook back the light brown hair that had fallen into her eyes: the Rector and his companion looked at each other as if considering who should accost her first, or how to do so without causing alarm. Philip, however, soon settled the point by springing to her side, and taking the pitcher from her hand: she certainly started at first, but it was evident she was not much displeased, for they remained whispering together to the utter oblivion of the presence of Lionel Revis, who sat patiently down on the nearest stile, and admired the delicacy of his own position. Patience, however, was, as he himself acknowledged, by no means his cardinal virtue, and after enduring it for seven minutes and a half, he rose up, and wished them good morning. Both started like guilty things; Ellen dropped a curtsey, and Philip the pitcher of water: Lionel

appeared not to notice their confusion, but taking her by the hand, enquired kindly after her health, and why he had not seen her that day at her father's cottage. The poor girl burst into tears at the question, which excited Philip almost beyond endurance. "Nelly," he said, eagerly, "you needn't fear Mr. Revis: he is kindness itself: he will be our friend; he won't think two young hearts ought to be broken because of the pride and self-will of old ones: I know he'll stand by us, won't you, sir? you'll help us if you can; you'll persuade them, you'll win them over; you'll do *something* to give us hope; nobody else can do anything; you won't say to us, as the rest do, in that cold-blooded way that drives one wild, "It can't be, so you must forget it;" you are too good, too feeling; Oh Ellen dear! stop crying, and hear what his Reverence will say."

"What can I say?" said Lionel, looking at them both full of pity, and weighing their difficulties more accurately than themselves, "even to stop Ellen's tears, what can I say, but patience, patience, and trust in God?"

Philip glanced sorrowfully at Ellen, who was meekly drying her eyes. "It is hard to have patience sometimes," he said.

Ellen begged him not to say so. "Yes, let him say it," interrupted Lionel, mildly, "and I will join him; it *is* hard to have patience, not sometimes, but always: at least I find it so: the Saviour Himself found it so, yet who was so patient, or so sorely tried?" Ellen looked up with a smile, that showed the remembrance was comforting, but Philip shook his head discontentedly. "I'll tell you what makes it so hard, sir; if I wanted, or Nelly either, to do anything wrong or foolish, they might tell

us to forget it; if I wanted to entice her away from her old father and mother, or to marry before I could keep her, or do anything to be ashamed of, it would seem right enough to keep us apart; but just because of pride and quarrels, to make her ill, and me miserable; I say it's hard, and it's cruel, and it's what I can't bear! There ain't a better or more dutiful girl in all England, sir, I say it before her face, than my Nelly: she never gave her parents a cross word or look, and I'd die sooner than tempt her to do wrong: but love her I must, and love her I will, and if they drive a fellow to the wall, they must take the consequences!"

"Now, Philip," said Mr. Revis, as the indignant youth stopped for breath, "in your angry mood perhaps you will be angry with me: but you asked my advice; and whenever I give any, it must be from my heart, must it not?"

"Of course, sir."

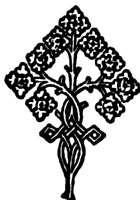
"Oh please, sir," put in Ellen, timidly, "don't think poor Phil means wrong! it's all on account of me he feels it, and I heard how kindly you spoke of him to father to-day."

"I spoke the truth behind his back, as I do to his face." replied Lionel, "so now listen to me, and believe me, I am only advising you from the sincerest wish for your happiness. Love on, no one can forbid that; be faithful to each other, no one can hinder that: but on no consideration, be tempted, or tempt each other, to deceive, or to disobey. Do your duty cheerfully, each in his appointed way; be dutiful children; bear with your parents' infirmities; submit to their will without rebelling; trust everything to the Lord, and leave Him to work for you

His own way. Blessings come in the path of duty, and there only; if you go on murmuring and repining, and use deceitful means to accomplish what you desire, you will only reap bitterness, disappointment and trouble. Love God first; and each other in Him: do good; be truthful; live in peace; but never, never, be induced to follow your own passions, and make your love an excuse for doing wrong. Are you so old that you cannot wait? or so holy that you can dispense with trouble? or so wise that you must see everything arranged your own way? I think differently of you both; and with this I must lèave you. If Philip will walk home with me, I think I can give him something to do, which will be better for him than fretting in idleness; and if Ellen will take my advice, she will fill that brown pitcher again, and go home to give cheerfulness to her parents' lonely fireside."

Whether this was the best advice they could have had: whether it would have been wiser and safer, at once to tell them to give over such folly, and leave love and sentiment for those who could afford it; or on the contrary, whether it would have been kinder, to offer them assistance towards clandestine meetings, and plausible disobedience, on the principle that to love all things are permitted, must be decided in our readers' minds according to their particular bias. Such counsels are scarcely likely to be popular, being too encouraging for the prudent old, and too strict for the impetuous young; and Philip Lee, though he listened with much respect, seemed half disappointed that the Rector had nothing better to propose. But Ellen curtseyed gratefully, and looked in his face with a modest confidence that showed her fervent trust in his good will, as she expressed a timid hope they should follow his

advice. And so with a kind farewell, Lionel turned on his way home, and whether he was counting the clouds, or looking for larks, or watching the effect of his church tower among the trees, or lost in the composition of his commentary, or in the peroration of some sermon yet unborn; certain it is, that he never once turned his head to see what went on behind him, though as he had invited Philip to accompany him home, he might naturally have been expected to look whether he was coming or not.





CHAPTER IV.

MONG all his pressing avocations, Lionel Revis did not forget Julia; though, judging by the result, she might have been better pleased to be forgotten. She had expressed a wish for employment, but had no idea of being employed immediately, and had settled down to her drawing, under a combination of favourable circumstances; a good light, a steady table, the children gone to play; when Jane Barnard made her appearance with a bundle of parish books, eager to explain and initiate, and make Julia an official dignitary at once. Mr. Revis had begged her to give Miss Seymour a class in the school, and to find her plenty to do, so she had lost no time in making arrangements which were to give her friend so much pleasure. "Don't think of the trouble, dear, it is the greatest delight to me to be able to show you anything, and then to have you always working with me; oh, it will make my life so happy!" Julia had not the heart to damp her satisfaction; and turning away from the tempting Cattermole, she tried to look as happy as Jane wished; feeling all the time that her mother's keen eye was watching her, and reading every thought of her mind!"

"Here is a list of the different classes; you can walk

with me to the school by and bye, and take your choice: you must not expect them to be very clever, you know; they have had only stupid people like me to learn from, but after you have been there awhile, I shall see a great difference, I know," continued Jane, eagerly.

"I think you will," said Lady Seymour.

"Here is a list of the books we use; and this is the way we keep an account of their regular attendance: I make a point of being very regular myself, to keep them so, and so will you of course; I dare say, better than I do. And this is the club book; and this is the clothing book; and" in short, there seemed no end to the mysteries into which Julia was suddenly plunged; all which she knew to be her duty, and ought to be her pleasure, and yet to which, at that moment, no one could have felt more provokingly averse. She had been indulging that morning contrary to rule, in a Waverley Novel: and with her imagination filled with romantic images, had gone from its pages to Cattermole's designs; and a sadly lame and impotent conclusion to such chivalric studies, appeared the Sunday school and the parish visiting. She listened, however, and made suitable answers, and tried to feel interested, and not to yawn; but failing in the latter case, looked up with a guilty consciousness, and caught her mother's eye. Lady Seymour shook her head: "Mr. Revis judged too hastily, I am afraid, in choosing you for his assistant. Four-and-twenty hours is a long time for a fever of goodness to last."

"Now, pray do not say so, dear mamma," said Julia.

"Is it not so, my dear? were you not angry with me for doubting your zeal yesterday, and is it not marvellously cooled this morning?"

"Only since I did what I ought not to do: I was reading Walter Scott when I had several better employments waiting for me; and that has distracted my thoughts ever since. Grandmamma was quite right in advising me to resist those books at present: I must and I will, when I have finished that volume. Now, Jane, go on: I really wish to do some good; but I am afraid no one will be much the better for the teaching they get from me."

"Well, you can teach them candour, at any rate," said Lady Seymour, smiling: "but if I had known what you were about this morning, I should soon have interfered with your studies. I cannot let you waste your time in that manner; especially if half your days are to be taken up with all this press of business. I pity poor Jane, if she depends on your regularity."

But Jane would hear nothing of the kind; Julia could do no wrong; her volatility was only cleverness; a head that could read Walter Scott in the morning, must be equal to any exertion of judgment or ingenuity; and as to goodness, if Julia was not good, Jane was sorry for many of her friends. "Good," repeated Julia, shaking her head, "that I shall never be: I cannot even keep a good resolution, or perform one day what I vowed the day before. Mamma is quite right; I shall never be of any use."

"Never," said Lady Seymour, decidedly, "if you waste time in talking of your faults without trying to mend when you have the opportunity. I can only say you must do one thing or the other; for I cannot have my room full of account books all day, whatever may be my friend Jane's plans, or Mr. Revis's imperial command."

Thus admonished, the young ladies went on with in-

creased speed, and were progressing in a manner creditable both to teacher and pupil, when the door was thrown open, and in walked Lord Eustace.

Could he have read in the three hearts before him, their private opinion on his unexpected appearance, he might not have smiled so cordially, or shaken hands with so much warmth: happy in the delusions of society, he seemed to take his welcome for granted, and began doing his best to deserve it. He apologised for the unseasonable hour of his call; but hoped they should always be on such friendly terms as might justify such an intrusion; praised the house, the grounds, the view and the entrance: asked for the children, complimented Julia, and to her great dismay, walked across the room to examine her drawing. "I am a dabbler in this way myself, Miss Seymour, so I feel a strong sympathy with every pencil I see: very good, indeed—admirably begun. Do not get your outline too stiff, and use your large brush more freely: I see you have taste and power, and industry I cannot question."

"Lord Eustace's praise is worth having, Julia," said Lady Seymour; "we all know his fame in that art. I hope, my lord, you continue to cultivate it?"

"I sketch a little, just a little," he replied, (in a tone that meant, "indeed I paint remarkably well.") "I have not much time to spare for such a recreation: public affairs harass me night and day; and this morning I have met with a private vexation, that is partly the cause of my troubling you at this early hour." He looked wistfully at Julia, who made a movement to leave the room. "No, my dear young lady, I must entreat you to remain; you will understand me the more readily, from having been our fellow traveller the other day."

"When you lost your pocket-book!" exclaimed Julia.

"Just so," returned he, his sterner expression returning slowly over his features, as from some painful combination of ideas. "There was nothing of value in the book beyond some memorandums, of peculiar consequence to myself alone. You saw my annoyance at the loss; judge how still greater it must have been, when it was found this morning—where do you think?"

"In your own pocket," suggested Julia.

"I wish it had been," he said, slightly frowning, "any inadvertence on my own part, would have been preferable to deceit on that of my daughter."

"Your daughter, my lord?" repeated both Lady Seymour and Julia in the same breath. Jane, who had retreated to a distant corner the moment he appeared, looked up now with a sudden glow on her cheeks.

"Ay," he replied, sadly, "it is even so. The book fell by accident out of her work-box: what was her object no one can tell; still less why she persists in denying any knowledge as to how it came there. It is not from light motives I tell you this; I am come to throw myself on Lady Seymour's friendship: my daughter (he cleared his throat several times), Beatrice Eustace, has neither mother nor sister; her health is not strong, and there is about her at times, something that makes me uneasy: a morbid tendency, a gloom, a listless indifference, which if given way to, must lead to serious consequences. I have consulted the ablest medical men, and they all recommend cheerful society without late hours or fatigue: in fact, a young friend," he looked hard at Julia, whose sparkling eyes were never moved from his face, "a young, cheerful, kind-hearted friend, is the medicine she most requires. Might I but hope she will find one here?"

"If I know my daughter's face, she has found it already," said Lady Seymour; "ever since they travelled together, I believe Miss Eustace has been the subject of Julia's thoughts by day, and dreams by night: is it not so, Julia?"

"I have thought of her *very* often," said Julia, blushing; "and shall be glad indeed to see her again."

"Shall you?" said the peer, taking both her hands; "and will you go back with me now, and spend the day with her?"

"Now, my lord?"

"Yes; I startle you by such a precipitate invitation; hear the state of the case. I was incensed with her this morning, naturally, properly incensed, and spoke to her severely: it is very seldom I do so, and I suppose, from the novelty of the circumstance it overcame her the more: she was much agitated, and especially so, when I desired her to keep to her own apartments till further orders. It was my duty, you must perceive, to testify in some method, my displeasure at her still maintained denial of her fault: I could do no otherwise: nevertheless, I am apprehensive of the effect it may have on her spirits, and if I could persuade you, Miss Seymour, how kind and charitable it would be to go and bear her company in her captivity, and try gently to bring her to a better and happier frame of mind, it would be an indescribable relief; and an obligation I shall never be able to repay."

"I am ready to go this minute," cried Julia, starting up. "Mamma, you have no objection, I am sure?"

"None in the world, my dear: if any one will be able to cheer Miss Eustace's spirits, I think it will be yourself. Go to her forthwith: stay as long as she wishes, and be all the support and comfort to her you can."

"That I will," thought Julia, as she flew up stairs to prepare, hardly able to believe the reality that she was thus singled out for the very office she had been longing to fill. Before her toilette was complete, her mother came to hurry her. "Your papa is talking to Lord Eustace, and I came up to give you a hint, Julia. Take care what you say and do: make his lordship no promises of what you will say to his daughter, and what you will repeat to him. Be her friend in simple, steady honesty, and you may be of use; but if they make a tool or a spy of you, you may cause infinite mischief."

"A tool or a spy of me?" repeated Julia, indignantly, "they will not find that easy, I hope, mamma. I am convinced Miss Eustace is innocent, and I will stand by her against the world."

"That is not necessary, I hope; and as to her innocence, that remains to be proved. Pocket-books do not creep into people's work-boxes of their own accord: however, we'll hope she is more sinned against than sinning; and all I mean is, my love, be watchful over your own impetuous little tongue, and let nothing induce you to deviate a step from your natural straight forwardness. Now come down stairs: there is no occasion to be an hour putting on a bonnet and shawl."

But Julia, before she left the room, stood alone for a few minutes, pondering on what had been said, and on the position she was called upon to occupy. "I may either be of use or of harm;" she repeated, "and how am I to know, and who is to show me? How negligent I have been this morning! how self indulgent, how forgetful of everything but my own gratification!" And strange as it may appear to some, though not to any one who has

ever tried the experiment, hurried as she was, Julia knelt down for a minute, and in a few words confessed her difficulties, and besought help and guidance, and rose again light of heart, and refreshed as from some vivifying spring.

As Lord Eustace's gig drove from the door, Jane Barnard's eyes followed them in silence: then with a sigh of disappointment, she gathered up her books and papers, and wished Lady Seymour good morning, to seek comfort among the humble friends where she need fear no rival. Julia had spoken kindly to her at parting, but she had hardly had a moment to do it in; his Lordship was waiting, and she hurried away repeating, "Come again to-morrow, and then we shall have no interruption." "That is as may be," thought Jane, and she went away very heavy at heart.

Sir John stood watching his visitor's departure with a thoughtful air and a dubious shake of the head. "I do not like the way my lord talks at all," he said to his wife; "he is for carrying matters with far too high a hand in these times. His tenants murmur at the raising of their rents, and he declares he will not abate a farthing: he is very unpopular; nothing but discontent and grumbling among them, and not a word of reason will he hear. He will get into trouble before he has done; and especially so if he is hard upon those who suffered by the fire. I had a talk with that confidential friend of his, Hargrave of Myrton, to-day; and gave him some solid advice, but the booby did not seem inclined to follow it."

"Hargrave? a relation, I suppose of Miss Eustace's companion?"

"Her cousin, he says: he is my lord's right hand, as

she is to the young lady, and I believe they both encourage him in these dogmatical notions. It will not do, and so I told him: if the Chartists begin their mischief in the neighbourhood, as young Revis thinks they will, Lord Eustace may find his position very awkward."

"I declare," interrupted Lady Seymour, "if Julia has not left her parasol behind her. That child's heedlessness is incurable. Here, Gotham, run as fast as you can across the lawn, and you may meet the carriage as it turns down the lane."

Gotham obeyed, and ran, as fast as his dignity and asthma would permit; fortunately the lane being full of stones, Lord Eustace was driving slowly, and Julia got her parasol. In the act of handing it to her, Gotham caught his Lordship's eye, and made him his most graceful bow. The peer gave a perceptible start, and muttered something, Julia hoped she misunderstood: then with a brief haughty nod drove away at full speed.

"How long has that man been in your father's service, Miss Seymour?" he asked abruptly.

"Some years, my lord, I forget how many."

"Did you ever hear with whom he resided previously?"

Julia smiled. "It would be strange indeed to live in the same house with Gotham, and not in some way hear of his late master, Doctor Grantley. He comes in apropos to everything; and appears to have been an authority in all matters, whether of body or mind. Papa's great amusement is to draw him out on his favourite topic, and it is irresistible to see the happy self-delusion with which he delivers his own opinions in the Doctor's name."

"Singular!" muttered the peer; "that he should be here, and I should not have seen him before!"

"Very likely, my lord, when you have called here before, he was in town with grandmamma. She goes to London sometimes, and prefers Gotham's attendance to any one's."

"Then he is a trusty servant on the whole?"

"Oh, quite so, I am sure," said Julia, wondering what all this meant: but she was left to wonder, for Lord Eustace said no more on the subject. Instead of taking her directly to the Hall, he seemed to change his mind, and drove round a part of his estate, where he was planning improvements; and Julia was called upon for sympathy and attention, on matters wherein she could feel but little interest. Anxious to please him, she tried hard to understand, and to give such an opinion as he would like best: but found this sometimes difficult.

"I think I told you, Miss Seymour, I am in a small way, a student of the picturesque; and I think I may allow myself a little enjoyment in landscape gardening. You see what is wanted here; those two hideous cottages must be pulled down; the leases are just out; the trees at the back will be cleared away, and you will then have a view unparalleled in this side of the country. Do you not think it will be a great improvement?"

"Very great, my lord: but the people in the cottages?"

"Oh, that is my affair, or rather Mr. Hargrave's; Hargrave will take care of them."

"Ay, we all know what that 'ere means, and precious little good shall we get by it," growled a voice, proceeding from a red haired, sturdy fellow leaning on a fence close beside them.

"What do you mean, sir?" said the peer, sternly. The man swung his legs over the rails, and stood by the horse's head.

"Beg pardon, my lord," touching his forehead with a degree of sulky respect, "beg pardon, no offence meant, but I hope as how you'll think twice afore you pull down my cottage."

"I shall do what is right and fit, you may be sure," said his Lordship, "stand out of the way."

"Do what's right? ay, do that, and we'll want nothing more, my lord: but I don't think it's right to grind the poor, and parson Revis will tell you a mighty different story."

The peer made an angry motion with his whip to make him stand aside, but the fellow was stubborn. "You've raised our rents to the highest penny, and Muster Hargrave's a mighty hard hand to deal with: there is no mercy and no help when a man gets a bit behind: we're all nigh mad, my lord, and so I tell you in time, and it won't do now a days to drive us too hard: flesh and blood won't stand it, my lord—you would'nt like it yourself."

"I shall remember your insolence, sir, you may depend upon it," said Lord Eustace, "and if you do not wish to be run over, you had better stand out of my road. Let go, sir, I say!" for the man had hold of the rein, "let go, or—" his whip fell smartly over the fellow's shoulders. He let go immediately, and slunk aside for a minute; but as the carriage dashed past, Julia saw with terror that he stood glaring after it with his clenched fist brandished, and a savage defiance in his eyes that gave him the countenance of a demon.

"How little these fellows know me," said Lord Eustace, "when they think I am to be shaken in a determination by any of their insolent threats." He might have observed that his determinations, whether right or wrong, were seldom moved by anything whatever: but of this he was

perhaps not aware himself. "There is the very man I want to see!" cried he, soon after, as he checked his horse. "Hargrave, here! I want to speak to you!"

An undersized, spare man, well dressed, but obsequious in manner, came up instantly, and made a low bow. "Hargrave, I have just been annoyed by that insolent fellow, Rogers; he shall rue the day he took such a liberty; get rid of him the moment you can, if you please."

"It shall be done, my lord," said Mr. Hargrave, with a gentle smile as if he enjoyed it.

"I am sorry to see, Hargrave, such a bad spirit abroad among the people: I have not stirred out once since I came down, but somebody or other has been pestering me with complaints. What is it all about? what do they want?"

"They want your lordship's land, and houses, and protection, without rent, that is all, my lord."

"I am much obliged to them, certainly: they will find themselves mistaken, in such calculations. Is there much distress about?"

"Real distress? oh no, my lord; just enough to make up a pitiable story when necessary: nothing more. I am firmly convinced the fire the other night was got up among themselves, to excite sympathy and draw contributions."

"If I thought so—" began his lordship.

"Very true, my lord, as you say; but there seems no doubt of it to any mind, less acted upon by professional prejudice than Mr. Revis, or by well intentioned weakness than Sir John Seymour."

"Give me leave," interrupted Lord Eustace, hastily, "Miss Seymour, my friend, Mr. Hargrave."

Julia bowed, very stiffly, for she felt excessively angry;

and Mr. Hargrave coloured, though retaining his self-possession. "I beg Miss Seymour's pardon a thousand times; Sir John's benevolence is so generally known and respected, I cannot be supposed to have intended more, than that his wish to do good is apt to warp his better judgment, as will be found, I fear, in the present instance."

"Well, well, no more of that," said his Lordship, good-humouredly, "it would be well if we had all a little more of that same quality, perhaps: let us see you at dinner to-morrow, Mr. Hargrave, if you have no better engagement."

Mr. Hargrave bowed, and they drove on.

"You must not be affronted with my friend, Miss Seymour," said Lord Eustace, "he has the highest respect for your father's goodness, and it was merely in his zeal for my service that he spoke as he did. Let me hope it will not prejudice you in his disfavour. He is a zealous friend of my house; cousin to that excellent lady you have seen in my daughter's company, who is so good as to reside with us, and supply the place of mother and sister to Beatrice."

"Indeed?" was all Julia could say, seeing he paused for a remark; and not feeling disposed to compliment either one or the other. A silence of some moments ensued; broke by Lord Eustace as if thinking aloud. "Yes, poor Beatrice: her situation is a lonely one; and in her state of health—my dear Miss Seymour, but for the old friendship between our families, I had hardly dared presume thus on your kindness; but trusting to it as I do; there are many ways in which you can do us all service—one is—" he paused.

"Only let me know what it is, my lord," said Julia, "and be sure I will do my best."

"Thank you, thank you; I rely upon that promise: but it is difficult to state in words exactly what I wish; you will judge better when you have been in her society. There may be something she wishes to have, or to say, or to do, which she will not name—but which preys on her spirits; and which a young friend, lively and penetrating like yourself, may easily discover; and if you should, and would kindly inform me *privately*, I may be able to gratify my daughter, without her divining whence I obtained the knowledge."

"Nothing can be kinder than that," thought Julia.

"In short, Miss Seymour, if you would act a true friend's part, as your family have always done by mine, you will diligently watch my daughter's manner and conversation; and without exciting her suspicions in any way, bring me a faithful report of what passes between you—so that I may judge from the state of her mind and feelings what remedy will be best applied. At present I am quite in the dark, as in my company she is remarkably reserved. Let me request, too," seeing Julia about to speak, "that your report be not made in any way to our kind friend, Mrs. Hargrave, whom it might shock and annoy; but to myself, quietly—you understand me."

"I think I do, my lord," said Julia, colouring, "but if you please, you must understand *me*. I am quite willing to let you know any wish Miss Eustace may have ungratified, if she has not courage to tell you herself; but as to staying a minute in her company, if I thought I had to tell you afterwards all we said and did, I could not do it for the world!"

"Well, well," said he, somewhat hastily, and biting his lip," you cannot suppose I wish to be a spy on your conversation, Miss Seymour: only it is of great importance for me to be in possession of my daughter's real frame of mind, and I hoped you would kindly assist me."

"And so I will," said Julia, "but you must let me do it my own way. If there is anything I think you ought to know, and that I ought to tell you, you may depend on my fidelity."

"I ask no more—I have no right to ask more of any one," said his Lordship, "I only entreat you to bear in mind the peculiarity of this case, and not to allow any well meant scruples to hinder you from effecting real good."

They had now entered the park, and were within sight of the house, when they observed a mounted figure advancing to meet them. "Here comes that splendid horse I have noticed so many times," said Lord Eustace, "and I never knew to whom it belonged: can you tell at this distance, Miss Seymour? I suppose it is some one I ought to know."

"You certainly ought, my lord," said Julia, "for it is our rector, Mr. Revis."

"Is it indeed? I am very glad we have met; I hear a most extraordinary account of his abilities: rather inclined to enthusiasm, though; is he not?"

"Very much so, I should think," said Julia, in whose opinion enthusiasm was the salt of excellence, "the good he does is immense."

"Ah!" said his Lordship, rather discontentedly, "but that may be carried too far, in these times especially. Good morning, sir, I am very glad to be just in time to induce you to turn back," continued he, in his most gra-

cious manner, bowing low in return to Lionel's salutation, as the latter rode up to the side of the carriage. "This call is most kind and pastoral on your part, and I cannot bear to lose such an opportunity."

"Your Lordship must excuse me now," replied Lionel. "I have been waiting in your study, in hopes of your return, and am now on my way to keep an appointment."

"I am exceedingly concerned; is there anything I could do for you, Mr. Revis? you look as if you had come on some urgent business: I know already that your time is never unemployed for an instant."

Lionel smiled. "I believe nobody's need be—or rather nobody's can be, my lord: we are always employed, either doing harm or good."

"Come, come, my dear sir, that is a paradoxical assertion, for which I must demand a proof. At this moment that we are all three doing nothing at all, how can we be at mischief, if we wished it?"

"I wish, my lord, we could do good as easily. Half the mischief in the world might be traced to the bad effects of casual conversations, leaving impressions on the mind, little attended to at the time, and very difficult to efface afterwards."

"Then, perhaps," said Lord Eustace, smiling, "you are doing me harm at this moment."

"I confess it," said Lionel: "I am wronging your Lordship, by delaying the information I came to bring. It is simply this—a committee is being formed by Sir John Seymour and other gentlemen, for the assistance of our poor neighbours, who suffered by the fire the other night; and I am deputed to request your Lordship to accept the chair."

"Thank you, thank you, sir, you do me too much honour," said Lord Eustace, bowing, with an embarrassment he strove to conceal, by changing the subject, "what a noble creature that is of yours, Mr. Revis! He would make a first rate hunter. excuse my saying, he must be quite thrown away on his present occupation."

"He comes from a hunting stable, certainly," said Lionel, keeping his keen eye, as his custom was, full on the countenance he was addressing, "and his sporting talents are at present in abeyance; but I am not inclined to think powers, and strength, and beauty wasted, when employed, however quietly, in the service of God and the poor."

"The *poor*," repeated Lord Eustace, "yes, that is the fashionable cry of the day, Mr. Revis; schools for the poor; clothes for the poor; soup, libraries, gardens, for the poor: we shall have parliaments next, I suppose, and Her Majesty will hold drawingrooms for the poor; and there will be a season at St. Giles's and Kensall Green, as well as Grosvenor Square and Hyde Park. Every age has its hobby, and this is peculiar to the present: I respect the intention, but I am an older man than you, Mr. Revis, however inferior in other qualifications; and as I cannot profess to be one of your red-hot philanthropists, you must excuse me."

"Nay, my lord, red-hot is not the temperature required; it would only burn our fingers; a warm healthy circulation is what we want most; and our present object being to provide shelter and food for your houseless tenants, we considered it due to your Lordship, to tell you of our proceedings; relying on the liberality for which your House has always been distinguished."

"You must excuse me, sir," said Lord Eustace, coldly. "I have my reasons—I will not pledge myself—I am far too little satisfied with the spirit of my poorer tenants, to come forward as their purveyor: you are at liberty to do what you please among them, but my name must not be mentioned."

"I beg your Lordship's pardon," said Lionel, gravely, "but we cannot help its being *mentioned*, that is unavoidable; the *manner* in which it is mentioned must depend on your Lordship only."

Lord Eustace looked up, as if wondering at the audacity that ventured to argue thus; but his eye fell rebuked before the glance he met, and his checked wrath only found vent in the dark colour that mounted to his temples. "This is plain speaking for a short acquaintance, Mr. Revis."

"If I have offended your Lordship," said Lionel, "you must receive it as a practical illustration of my argument just now, respecting the ease with which we can do mischief: the offence was unintentional."

"Offence, sir? none, I assure you; to speak openly and plainly is the privilege, the duty of your office," said Lord Eustace, recovering himself, and speaking with more than his former urbanity; "and in return, I will frankly tell you, that I have grounds for suspecting the fire the other night, in which you displayed such distinguished gallantry," with a gesture towards Lionel's maimed hand, "was by no means the *accident* you imagine. I am firmly convinced," speaking with increasing warmth, "if we could trace half these grievous disasters to their proper source, we should find them originate in some of these deep laid schemes of trickery, by which a pseudo

benevolence is perpetually kept in being. Under this impression, sir, you must see I could be of no use in presiding at your committee. But courage, Mr. Revis! you have Sir John, and Lady Seymour, and doubtless Miss Seymour too, on your side; and when the ladies take up the cause of a charity, there is little doubt of its prospering."

"Their hearty co-operation is of great value, certainly. Have you seen Miss Barnard this morning, Miss Seymour?" asked Lionel, stroking his impatient horse's mane.

Julia, stricken in conscience, replied in the affirmative: Lord Eustace observed, he believed he had interrupted some benevolent expedition, by carrying away his amiable companion to visit his daughter.

"Mr. Revis will think I forsake the poor for the rich," said Julia, in a light tone, that veiled her secret anxiety, lest he should blame her in earnest; but his kind, frank smile dispelled all such fears.

"Confidence deserves confidence," he said, with an arch expression, that forcibly convinced her he had heard the conversation he interrupted the day before; "you will, I am sure, give each their proper share of your attention, and to all bear in mind, you must either do them harm or good. And now I must wish you good morning, I have been keeping you in the sun, which is a hard case on those who *have* a roof to shelter them from the weather." He glanced at his watch, and finding himself later than he expected, bowed hastily, and rode off at full speed.

"A fine young man," said Lord Eustace, looking after him, "and a good seat on horseback. He owes that, doubtless, to his uncle, Sir Geoffrey. You never heard perhaps, Miss Seymour, that he was intended for a country squire, and passed some years in field sports and

farming, and at last gave up all, even his uncle's promise of his estate, to enter the church?"

"I have heard something about it," said Julia, "but no particulars."

"Ah! it is a curious story, Lady Seymour knows it well; strange instance of the enthusiasm which seems his principal fault: but I will detain you no longer from the poor prisoner within. May I beg of you, in the exercise of that charity your clergyman recommends, not to be in a hurry to leave her? and if you can, persuade her to acknowledge her offence against me. Tell her it is her duty to be cheerful, and docile, and to make her home happy—tell her, in short—"

"Pray, my lord," interrupted Julia, out of patience with so many instructions, "give me no messages, I shall only make a blunder of them: leave me to my own devices, and if I fail, you have only to forbid my ever coming again."

"That would be punishing myself indeed," said he, gallantly, as he handed her out at the steps of the stately portico, and led her into the entrance hall.

Eustace Hall, though the estate had been for generations in the family, was itself of modern structure, and displayed more elegance than grandeur, more richness and beauty than romance of feudal state. The ancient mansion had been destroyed by Cromwell, in revenge for the gallant defence maintained against him by the inmates, headed by the brave and beautiful daughter of the Baron of that day, who had the charge of the household in her father's absence. The heroism, the beauty, and the melancholy fate of that young lady, was a favourite

topic in the annals of the house, and her portrait was one of the first that struck Julia's notice. She had no leisure however, to stop and admire: her senses were dazzled with variety and brilliance; the hall with its rows of marble pillars, the inlaid floors, the rich velvet carpets, the wide staircases, the endless suites of apartments, glittering with satin, and gilding, and damask, and embroidery; the windows, overlooking a triple row of terraces, and from thence a range of wooded hills, through which the bright river flowed in the sunshine; the costly ornaments, the mirrors and paintings in every variety of frame, the tables, covered with bijouterie and boxes, and books in gay bindings, and china vases of priceless value; the ceilings, some painted, others exquisitely finished, others heavy with gilt decoration — bewildered Julia's mind, and she went on like one in a dream. For years it had been a favourite source of expenditure in the Eustace line, to embellish and enlarge this cherished abode: the last possessor, his Lordship's elder brother, had lavished on its improvement immense sums; and though Lord Eustace had been very seldom a resident, he had still shared in the family taste. Some of the most magnificent additions had been only recently finished, and certainly, the eye might wander far and wide, before it would light on a more princely dwelling-place. He escorted his young guest himself through the apartments, delighting in watching her unsophisticated admiration, and explaining whatever he thought would interest her: but he was too anxious to allow her more than a glance, even at a statue gallery where she could have stayed for hours, or an armoury that called up the visionings she loved so well. In the latter room she was again struck with a

portrait of the royalist heroine, and in spite of Lord Eustace's fidgeting, stood resolutely still to admire it. The features bore a vivid resemblance to those of Beatrice: the same oval face and pale complexion, the same dark hair and sad sweet mouth: the same shadowy gloom in the large liquid eyes, that seemed mournfully gifted by nature to look upon the evil to come. Lord Eustace shook his head as he noticed Julia's fixed attention. "Yes, poor Lady Elinor! hers was a melancholy story: do you observe any likeness there to any face you have seen, Miss Seymour?" Julia named his daughter; he nodded approvingly, and hurried her away to an apartment retired from the rest, fitted up with much care and fastidiousness as a painting room. A large easel stood in front of a carved arm chair, against which leant an unfinished painting: he raised it up with much affection, and set it on the frame for Julia to inspect. It was a sketch begun with considerable spirit, being evidently a likeness of Miss Eustace in the costume of her heroic prototype, receiving a letter from the hands of a page. Julia paid a sincere compliment to the performance, and he bowed with ill-concealed gratification. "I am a dabbler in these things—a dabbler, Miss Seymour; I do not profess to excel, merely a touch or two to gratify myself, and employ my fancy when harassed by business and other necessary torments. It is unfinished you see, but when completed, I rather believe it will be good: you observe the depth of the colouring, the richness of the shade, as in these"—opening a portfolio full of incomplete pieces, wherein Miss Eustace figured in every description of character: "here is boldness and breadth, Miss Seymour, you must see: I have a right just to point this out

to you, because, without the least pretension to being an artist, I cannot help being aware of what I can do tolerably well, and I have been assured by good judges that my touch *is* extraordinary." Julia could only bow, and admire.

It was in fact one of the peculiarities of this respected nobleman, to be devoured with ambition for artistic eminence: having a correct eye, a degree of taste, and a facility in sketching, he could not divest himself of the overweening belief of his marvellous genius: his aim was always to perform a chef-d'œuvre, and never yet had he been able to succeed: he could just draw well enough to know he had *not* succeeded, and every new disappointment only added to his natural irritability. Alas! Miss Eustace knew too well what it was to sit in that velvet chair, and witness his almost frantic efforts to transfer to canvass, and ivory, and paper, the living beauty of her face and form. The fault was always hers, happen what might; either she did not look happy enough after an hour of scolding, or she had lost the heroic expression when wearied beyond possibility of concealment: no matter what the excuse was, it was enough to appease his self-contentment, and make her often wish she had been shaped like Riquet with the Tuft.

Julia however, knowing nothing of this, thought it the most natural thing in the world to make use of so charming a study, and further won his heart by begging for one of the sketches. He gave it to her with a smile, but on second thoughts, taking it back, promised she should have it in a day or two: he would touch it up a little first: Beatrice should sit to him to-morrow, and he hoped for a result worthy of Miss Seymour's album. "To-

morrow?" said Julia, eagerly, "then her imprisonment is only for to-day?" He changed countenance, said that must depend on circumstances: he had much reliance on Miss Seymour's powers of persuasion: he would hope the best, and meanwhile detain her no longer. Whereupon his Lordship rang a bell, and desired the footman to send Miss Eustace's page: and in a few minutes the page made his appearance, the same page, though equipped in the costume of the nineteenth century, who figured in slashed satins and plumed beaver in his master's painting. He was a shrewd, Spanish-looking lad, with a mouth like the immortal grin, left by Murillo on the walls of the National Gallery: to be in character, he ought to have worn a high-crowned hat, and carried a basket of grapes, or a marmozet: civilised silver buttons, and a tight-fitting jacket seemed as much thrown away on him, as a bag wig and ruffles would have been on Bampfylde Moore Carew. Julia, as she followed him up the wide stone staircase, in whose thick carpet the foot sunk as on a lawn, ran over in her memory all the pages he most resembled; till by the time they reached Miss Eustace's apartments, with the help of Sir Walter Scott, and G. P. R. James, she had given him a prototype for every button. It is probable some such process, though of a less chivalrous description, was passing through the mind of the page with respect to herself; for at the moment that his hand was laid on the lock of his mistress's door, he suddenly looked up demurely in her face, and asked, quite respectfully, if it was Miss Eustace or Mrs. Hargrave she wished to see? Julia, taken by surprise, answered more impetuously than propriety required, "Oh! Miss Eustace of course:" a reply which seemed to delight him in more ways than one, for the Murillo grin broke out beyond conventional

control, and disappeared somewhere behind his ears. He opened the door, and stepping lightly forward, announced, "Miss Seymour, ma'am, by his Lordship's desire."

The startled manner in which Miss Eustace rose, and the hurried tremulousness of her voice as she faltered a welcome, convinced Julia, that such a proceeding was more unusual than desired; and she felt so embarrassed with the honours and responsibilities of her position, as to be more than half disposed to turn and run out. She murmured something that was a counterpart of Beatrice's greeting, about Lord Eustace's request, and fear of intruding; and took the offered seat as if it had been a dentist's, and wished herself at home with Jane Barnard. Before this state of things had lasted five minutes, the page, who had been lingering in the room, arranging the flower stands, came softly up to his mistress, interrupting her enquiries after the health of Lady Seymour, by the query, "If you please, ma'am, shall you want the pony carriage this morning?"

"No, Paul."

"If you please, ma'am, shall you ride the grey pony to-day?"

"Not to-day, Paul." The boy hesitated, as if doubting whether he might venture further. "You may go now, Paul," said his mistress.

"Yes, ma'am;" he moved to the door; then came back a few steps. "If you please, ma'am, shall I set out your table under the chesnut tree? there is shade enough now, and it is cooler there."

Miss Eustace looked at him for a moment with a kind and gentle smile; "I shall not require it to-day, Paul, thank you."

The page gave an irrepressible snort of impatience and

vexation, and went out of the room to comfort himself by making horrible contortions at his Lordship's portrait in the hall.

"I like that boy!" cried Julia, as the door closed on him, "for I am sure he is attached to you." Miss Eustace stooped over her worsted frame, and asked after Lady Lovel, and in the set phrase of enquiry and reply, conversation dragged heavily for a short time longer, Julia answering at random, and indulging between whiles in her own speculations.

The room in which they sat was beautifully situated: the landscape was radiant; the flower stands clustering with variety of bright colours, the rich furniture, costly ornaments, gay hangings, and gilt and silver frames, gave an air of brilliance and luxury that might have become a palace; the sunshine that made its way in spite of all sheltering contrivances, hardly ever lighted on a brighter scene. But darkness, such as no sunbeam could illumine, darkness that no star appeared to cheer, the darkness that may be felt, that rises from the extinction of the day-spring within—lay gathered in a cloud on the beautiful downcast face, to whom all this splendour belonged. The sunshine fell round her and upon her, and gleamed on her hair, and flashed from the jewel on her bosom, but pierced not the shadow on her brow, nor called life into the pallor of her cheek. The weary drooping of the fringed eyelid, the languid fall of the thin white hand, the low thrilling tones of the soft voice, were signs that might have alarmed the experienced for her health, but which Julia could only refer to unkind usage, and her burning desire to befriend her became more provokingly intense, as Miss Eustace withheld encouragement. There is no saying how long this state of unsatisfactory politeness might have lasted,

if Julia had not perceived in an opposite mirror, that whenever she turned her head, Miss Eustace was narrowly scrutinizing her countenance. She looked quickly round with a smile, "Well, do you think you could trust me?"

Miss Eustace coloured crimson. "I really beg your pardon if I—"

"Pray do nothing of the kind: we are so formal already I hardly know what I am about: will you let me now talk to you as if we were old friends, and tell you how it is you are troubled with me this morning?"

Beatrice leaned slowly back in her arm-chair, and again looked earnestly in her face, but not as she had looked before: it was impossible to doubt the honest truth of Julia's sparkling eyes.

"I was in a very sea of business," Julia went on, "when Lord Eustace called, and asked me to come and visit you, as you would be at home alone all day: and he was pleased to call it charity, and I was pleased to find duty and inclination for once on the same side, so I consented directly, and here I am."

"And did he give you any reason," said Beatrice, "why I was to be alone all day?"

"Yes, he did," returned Julia, directly, "and I do not believe one word of it."

Miss Eustace held out her hand; "Thank you: that is kindly and honestly said: is that all you wished to tell me?"

"Not quite," said Julia, "I had some private conversation with his Lordship."

"And he gave you some messages for me—I know he did;" interrupted Beatrice, her eye dilating, and her brow growing darker, "tell me all at once."

Julia knelt on her footstool, and laid her arms on her

lap. "He would have given me messages, but I would not bring any; I told him if I was to be your friend, it must be in my own way; and my way is to stand by you, and help you all I can. He wishes us to be friends, and it will not be my fault if we are not: and if you are shut up for a month, I will come and stay every day with you, and ask for no greater treat."

Miss Eustace bent down and kissed Julia's forehead. And thus began this singular friendship, whose steadiness would seem purposely to contradict the generally too well founded prejudice, against young and sudden attachments; between two natures, whose similarity in dissimilarity was as marked, as between the Allegro and Penseroso of Milton. The proportions of their sentiments towards each other were such as might be expected, when one was a reigning beauty of four and twenty, and the other a romantic little enthusiast of seventeen; Julia neither expected nor desired her chivalrous feelings of self-devotion to be requited; she had realised at last her favourite day-dream, of having some one to love and serve, who combined beauty and grace with softness and melancholy; and she wished for nothing more, but the power to befriend her according to her need.

The time passed quickly and pleasantly; by mutual consent unsatisfactory topics were laid aside, and they compared tastes and discussed authors; and Julia found that, notwithstanding Miss Eustace's cynical observations during the journey, she was well versed in all her favourite writers, and in many more to which she was a stranger; and they ransacked the shelves, and piled the chairs and tables with richly bound volumes; and Beatrice read aloud, and her friend thought no music had ever been sweeter, and her admiration was so palpably dis-

played in her eyes, Miss Eustace could not help seeing it. She stopped short in the midst of a favourite passage, and with a smile and blush, declared it was Julia's turn to exhibit her powers of elocution.

"How cruel," said Julia, "to break off so bright a dream! How can I attempt to read after you?"

"Are you come to lay snares for my vanity?" returned Beatrice, smiling, "that is not the part of a true friend. Indeed, my voice requires a respite, and it will be a real pleasure to hear yours."

"If it is any pleasure to you, you shall hear it all day long; even if you fix on those tremendous metaphysical translations, provided you do not expect me to admire them. Shall I try this inviting little volume? you have not read it, I see, by the uncut leaves."

"No, I bought it the day before I left town: open it at random, and read the first thing you find." Julia cut open a page, and began in the middle of one of the most touching poems in our language.

"Do what I may, go where I will,
Thou meet'st my sight;
There dost thou glide before me still—
A form of light!
I feel thy breath upon my cheek—
I see thee smile, I hear thee speak—
Till, oh! my heart is like to break,
Casa Wappy!

"Methinks thou smil'st before me now,
With glance of stealth;
Thy hair thrown back from thy full brow,
In buoyant health:
I see thine eyes' deep violet light,
Thy dimpled cheek, carnation'd bright,
Thy clasping arms, so round and white,
Casa Wappy!

"The nursery shows thy pictured wall,
Thy bat, thy bow,
Thy cloak and bonnet, club and ball;
But where art thou?
A corner holds thine empty chair,
Thy playthings idly scattered there,
But speak to us of our despair,
Casa Wappy!

"Even to the last thy every word—
To glad, to grieve—
Was sweet as sweetest song of bird
On summer's eve;
In outward beauty undecayed,
Death o'er thy spirit cast no shade,
And like the rainbow thou did'st fade,
Casa Wappy!

* * * *

"Farewell, then—for awhile, farewell,
Pride of my heart!
It cannot be that long we dwell,
Thus torn apart:
Time's shadows like the shuttle flee:
And dark howe'er life's night may be,
Beyond the grave I'll meet with thee,
Casa Wappy!"*

Julia had not done herself justice in speaking lightly of her skill in reading poetry; her voice was clear, her intonation melodious; and this touching fragment, too pathetic to read unmoved even alone, thrilled to the heart-strings of Beatrice Eustace. She sunk back in her chair, and covered her face with her hands. Julia laid down the volume. "I should not have chosen anything so melancholy, but I could not stop when I had once begun. Dear Miss Eustace, why did you let me go on?"

* Delta, in Chambers' Miscellany, Vol. I, where it is said that "Casa Wappy was the self-conferred pet name of an infant son of the poet"

Beatrice struggled to speak with composure. "It was only that those verses reminded me—oh! how forcibly! of a dear child I loved. I must not think of them: I cannot discuss their merits, exquisite as they are. Put the book out of sight, and, if you can, help me to forget it." Her voice faltered tremulously: Julia kissed her hand with affectionate sympathy, but dared not attempt words of comfort for fear of probing the unseen wound. Beatrice repeated mournfully, "Beyond the grave!—may we, dare we, sinful as we are, point to the invisible and unknown, and say, there we shall be accepted, there we shall be at rest? Who tells us that it is so? who shall presume to believe it when told? who can lift the veil, and say whether the rash belief was recompensed and justified?"

"The writer of those verses believed it," said Julia, "and it seemed to comfort him."

"Oh! if he really believed, well might he be comforted! What would life's troubles be, after all, if we were sure, with life, their power would cease?"

"But we *are* sure of it," said Julia, "the Bible tells us so: and not only after life, but while life lasts: else what is the meaning of the words, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest?"

"What, indeed!" said Beatrice, with a long-drawn sigh. She rose, and took two or three turns up and down the room, till her former quiet serenity was restored: then sat down again by her friend, and drew a work-table forward, with deep drawers full of costly articles. "Are you fond of work, Julia?"

"Do you mean needlework? I dislike idleness, and am ambitious to be useful; but the needle is not the favourite it ought to be. I was told once, that I ought

not to work much, till I had learnt to *think* profitably: and on that principle it would appear conceited if I were to set about being industrious."

"On such a principle my mind must be of a far higher tone than I was aware of," returned Beatrice, as she drew forth parcel after parcel of finished performances, models of taste and skill, and in Julia's opinion, marvels of ingenuity. Miss Eustace smiled at her expressions of wonder: she did not know how it was, but whenever she saw a new pattern, she liked to try it, and whatever she began, she made a point of finishing: there they accumulated, for she had no use for them when finished: would Julia kindly relieve her of some? they would make good patterns, at any rate.

"Good patterns!" thought Julia, turning over the heap of velvet, chenille, beads, canvas, and embroidery, "and all this expense for no use whatever! What would mamma say?"

"I see what you are thinking," said Miss Eustace, "by that grave shake of the head: you see before you as fair an emblem of my existence as I could give you: continual toil, costly materials, and utter uselessness in the end."

"If it be so," said Julia cheerfully, "it shall be mine to prove that the emblem is misinterpreted. I will take away one of these bags, and use it for every homely purpose I can think of: and we can consult together how to mend our ways, as much as you please; for I too, am conscious of unpardonable indolence in duties, but by no means convinced that I am never to improve."

Beatrice smiled, and laid her hand on her shoulder. "My father showed himself a skilful practitioner, when he sent you here to do me good. If you succeed in making my work useful, it will encourage me to hope I may

become so likewise; but you must give it a fair trial." So saying, she selected an elegant work-bag, (alas, poor Jane Barnard! how different from yours!) and in spite of remonstrance or refusal, put into it everything Julia had admired, and many other articles that had escaped her notice. And Julia was forced to yield, for the novel pleasure of making a present, so brightened Beatrice's features, it was not in her heart to refuse her the gratification. She begged her to crown her gifts by a lesson in some of these new styles of fancy-work, and between the pains-taking on the part of the teacher, and the volatility on that of the pupil, cheerfulness returned, and poor Casa Wappy was forgotten.

Very pleasant too was the early dinner, at a small table near the window, seated opposite each other, with only Paul to wait upon them; especially for Julia to see the Murillo grin, widening into glee, as he watched the change that had passed over his young mistress's face, since he had seen it last; and how could she but rejoice in her own mirthful propensities, often as they had involved her in scholastic misfortune, when she succeeded in making Miss Eustace laugh? a low gentle laugh, as if she was unaccustomed to such an extravagance: but which, if it could have but been sufficiently repeated, would have done more to restore the natural colour to her cheek, than all the prescriptions of the faculty, or the water-springs of Baden and Ems.

Several times during this day did the Rector's caution recur to our little friend, "You must do good or harm"— and most earnestly did she hope she was on the side of utility now; but her self-satisfaction was not long in receiving a grievous check. The day had clouded over, but grown hotter instead of cooler; there was not a breath

of air, and a lurid appearance in the sky betokened a coming change of weather.

"How fresh it looks under the trees," said Julia unthinkingly, "would it not be pleasant to go out and roam about the woods?"

"You forget," said Beatrice, gently, "that you are visiting a prisoner."

Julia was vexed at having recalled it to her memory; especially as Miss Eustace sat down by the window, and leaning her cheek on her hand, looked out on the forbidden landscape with a deep sigh.

"I have hurt your feelings," she said, penitently, "I am afraid I shall often do so; I am so heedless in what I say."

"My feelings?" repeated Beatrice, "I have none, or I should have died long ago."

Julia looked wistfully in her face, and the tears swelled in her eyes. "No, no," added Beatrice, laying her hand on hers, "it was not of you I spoke then, my kind little comforter. Come, we will not fret of what cannot be remedied: what shall we do, since we cannot go out?"

"When will you be allowed to go out?"

"Perhaps to-morrow, perhaps in a week, perhaps in a month."

"And you can submit to this, knowing you are innocent? How did it all happen? When was the book found?"

"This morning, just after breakfast, Mrs. Hargrave accidentally overturned my work-box, and the book fell out among other things: my father was in the room, and naturally felt very angry. In his place, I might have felt the same; but his astonishment could scarcely be greater than my own."

"Who could have done it? Have you any enemies, whose object it could be to incense your father against you?"

"Perhaps: but there is no remedy."

"No remedy? There must be—there shall be! I will not rest till I find it out."

Beatrice moved away to the piano, slowly repeating—

> "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

"When you know us better, you will grow used to such mysteries as these. Now, sit down in your favourite chair by the window, and I will play to you."

She did play, and with great power; performing at first a few select pieces, asked for by Julia, as if studying how to please her best; but after awhile, she closed the book, and began wandering over the keys in a lost and absent manner, as if her thoughts were there seeking vent. By degrees the chords grew stronger, and the time more marked, till it swelled into a wild, melancholy, beautiful strain, that might have accompanied the lament of a fallen angel. The yearning for peace, the thirst for reconciliation, the anguish of unutterable regret—there was a voice, an echo for them all: and who could say how much of each had given the melody birth? The strain broke off abruptly:—the performer burst into tears.

"You will feel better now," said Julia, whose overflowing sympathy we leave our readers to conceive, "lie down quietly on the sofa, and I will sit with a book, and not disturb you."

Miss Eustace walked about the room, pressing her hand to her head. "How hot it is! how heavy, and dull, and close! I feel, I am sure, there will be a storm."

"It will cool the air," said Julia, "so I hope there may be."

"Then you do not fear it?"

"Not the least."

"And you will not leave me till it is over?"

"Not on any account," said Julia, observing with concern the sudden change in her countenance, now ghastly pale, with a dark line round her rayless eyes.

"Then I will lie down," said Beatrice, sinking wearily on the sofa. "Oh! would in mercy the storm were come and gone;—Julia!" she cried, suddenly starting up. Julia was by her side in an instant. "You say you will be my friend; you seem to feel kindly to me: can I rely on you? Will you, will you stand by me now?" Julia promised from the bottom of her heart. "Then bolt all the doors," said Beatrice, faintly, "and admit no one, on whatever pretence. Promise me this, and then I shall feel safe."

"I promise," said Julia, and she suited the action to the word forthwith, by securing every door that communicated with the gallery: a slightly heroic conjecture passing through her mind, as to the possibility of a barricade, if the lock should be forced, which in this castle of romance and mystery, seemed far from improbable. There were many ways of doing this, with two or three rooms full of furniture; but the small impediment of having only one little pair of hands, prevented any from being executed, and Julia was fain to trust to keys and bolts, and return to watch over her charge.

Beatrice Eustace had sunk again on the sofa; her head thrown back over the cushion; her dark hair, instead of its smooth glossy bands, pushed off her burning forehead, as if its weight gave pain; her eyelids closed, and the darkness of the long lashes appearing almost unnatural

on the pallor of her cheek; her hands fallen by her sides; her whole frame prostrated, whether by bodily indisposition, or hopeless weariness of spirit, it were difficult to tell: probably both had a share. And Julia sat and watched her in the stillness of the heavy atmosphere, and pondered much in her own mind what could be the worm that was cankering so stately a plant: what could be the secret gall that poisoned an existence so amply endowed with the gifts of God?

Earth's deepest, sternest lesson, often too sorely taught by the heart's unshared anguish, lay impressed before her in the experience of another. Could the preaching of eloquence, or the warnings of age, have more urgently forced on her reason the truth of truths—wrung from the bitterness of one great weary heart, and echoed by millions, who shared his folly, and forgot his warning—"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!"

All was vanity *here;* the gorgeous curtains, the costly ornaments, the lordly landscape, the faultless beauty of form—serving but to deepen the effect of the gloom they were so utterly powerless to overcome: and Julia, in the silence of that hour of watching, remembered how her own heart had been absorbed in worldly thoughts and wishes: how indifferent she had been to her duties; how weakly yielding to her unruly imagination; and many a good resolve did she form, as she had often formed before, of seeking duty *first* from that time forward. She would practise self-denial, lay aside all those too-fascinating books of amusement, set herself diligently to do her proper work, and earn her leisure and her peace of conscience by a continual fulfilment of useful occupations. It was no good going on as she had done, enjoying the present moment, and feeling afterwards ashamed of being idle and

useless: work she could, and work she would, and it might be that this new and interesting friend might, by her example, be induced to find happiness in the same way. But then came back the humbling recollection of broken resolutions and opportunities thrown away; checking the tide of self-satisfaction, and driving her to her only stronghold; secretly lifting up a prayer to be enabled to grow better, and to be of some use in the world, however humbly, and with whatever pain. "What!" the reader may ask, "praying again? saying prayers at all these odd moments, and whenever she was alone for a few minutes: how very strange!" I answer; sit by yourself awhile, and consider steadily your past, your present, and your coming life: try if you are quite satisfied with your progress, happy in your good conscience, confident of continual improvement and success: with no recollections of failure, no consciousness of weakness, no perception of a lurking disappointment in all you prized and strove for most; and when you begin to feel a dull weariness steal over your thoughts, and your heart sickening within you at the depressing aspect around—despise, if you will, the remedy of the child of God; but rob him not of that he needs as much as you, which cheers that indescribable languor of spirit with a leaf from the tree of life, throws serenity on the troubled past, and brightness on the cloud to come. Mock not at these praying moments, till you have tried their value.

The atmosphere had become so intolerably close, that Julia, though a few flashes had already shot across her eyes, could not bring her reason to admit the moral obligation of closing the windows. Nearer and nearer came the growl of the thunder, but not a drop of rain had fallen, though the clouds looked as if about to touch the

ground. Julia was happily a stranger to anything like fear, and much more disposed to admire than to shut out a storm; but on Beatrice's account she decided at last on prudential methods, and gently letting down the window, drew the curtain across. In the act of so doing, the lightning flashed in her face: she started back almost blinded, and before she could have counted ten, crash came such a thunder-peal as she had never heard in her life. At the same moment a hasty knocking was heard at the door— "Let me in, let me in," accompanied by eager rattling of the lock, and shaking of the panels. "Who is there?" asked Julia, glancing anxiously at the sofa.

"It is I, Mrs. Hargrave; you must let me in directly."

"Miss Eustace is asleep;" returned Julia: "and I promised not to open the door."

"Is that Miss Seymour's voice?"

"It is; I beg your pardon, Mrs Hargrave, for being so rude; but I promised faithfully." Again came the flash, and the roar of the thunder, as quick in succession as the report on a musket-shot. Miss Eustace started up: Mrs. Hargrave shook the door with redoubled vehemence. "Miss Seymour, you do not know what you are doing! you are taking a responsibility you will ever have cause to regret: open the door this instant, I conjure you!"

"Julia! Julia!" shrieked Beatrice. The storm raged on fiercer than ever. "I have promised!" repeated Julia to Mrs. Hargrave, "I cannot break my promise;" and she flew to the side of Beatrice, who was sitting in a half-crouching attitude, cowering down at every flash, as if it had been the stroke of a scourge. She caught Julia's arm, and pressed it wildly. "It is not true! tell me it is not true! you know how precious, how unutter-

ably dear he is to me; you know how he loves me; you do not, you cannot believe it was my doing; say it was not, only say it, or my heart will burst—will burst;" and she clasped her hands in an agony that no words could express, and which brought a gush of tears to Julia's eyes. She put her arm round her, and kissed, and tried to soothe her; but all was in vain: while the thunder rolled on, and the door continued to rattle with evidently increasing irritation. "Miss Seymour, you will repent this; you will, indeed: you may cause such unhappiness as in all your life you can never repair; open the door, if ever you hope to know peace again!"

Miss Eustace heard the call, and a change came over her face: the delirious fancy died away, and she recognized Julia, and remembered where she was. She pointed to the door with a faint smile; "Shall I open it?" asked Julia, who would not have done it unbidden to escape fire or sword.

"Yes, there is no help for it," said Beatrice, languidly, leaning her head on the end of the sofa, and shuddering from head to foot; "but tell her, tell her, dear Julia, that I am ill—I cannot speak to her—tell her to be merciful, and not crush me quite."

"Merciful?" repeated Julia to herself, glancing at the stricken form, and the fevered light of her eye, "who is there so tiger-hearted that would deal harshly with you now?" She opened the door, somewhat proudly, it must be owned, for she had no idea of apologising for having obliged her friend. Mrs. Hargrave as she entered, looked full in her face, and steady and searching was their mutual glance, with very small satisfaction to either. "I am sorry to intrude upon you, Miss Seymour, but my

duty must always be a paramount consideration, and Miss Eustace's health requires continual watching. How do you feel, my dear?"

Miss Eustace looked up, her lip quivering, and her large eyes full of tears.

"The storm will soon be over—I will not leave you," continued Mrs. Hargrave, sitting down by her on the sofa, and taking her hand, "you are feverish and low, my dear; I am afraid," glancing pointedly at Julia, "you have been talking and exerting yourself too much: I must speak to his Lordship about it to-morrow."

"No, indeed," interrupted Beatrice, "it was very kind of him to bring Miss Seymour, and most kind of her to come."

"Possibly; but your health, my dear," caressing her hand, "your health and your peace—"

"Peace!" repeated Beatrice, flinging the affectionate hand away, and standing suddenly erect, her eye glaring and her nostrils dilated, "peace! when did *you* ever consider my peace? Peace! a word whose meaning was lost to me from the hour that gave you a hold on my heart-strings, and from which you have banished me, I know not if not for ever! Peace! when have I known that blessing? you have stood like a foe in my path of salvation; you have coiled like a serpent round my moments of confidence; you have made a barrier between me and my father—you have hewn a gulf between my soul and God! To you I owe it that my conscience is oppressed; you entangled me in the ways of deceit, that I might be helpless under your guidance; you turned my bodily weakness into a snare for my intellect, and probed my heart to the core that you might learn how to wound me most

sorely! Heaven has decreed there is no peace for the wicked—earth denies it to the unhappy; therefore there is none for either you or me!"

"This must not be;" said Mrs. Hargrave, whose face had grown livid during this outbreak, "she is growing delirious: Miss Seymour, if you have any feeling, you will leave the room."

"I cannot leave her so," said poor Julia, who between her fear of doing harm, and her zeal to do good, felt nearly at her wits' end, "unless she wishes it. Had she not better go to bed?"

Mrs. Hargrave caught at the suggestion, but Beatrice appeared not to hear it, and walked up and down the room with faltering and disordered steps. Mrs. Hargrave at last rose, and going quietly into the bedroom, returned a minute afterwards with a small glass containing a dark liquid. "Drink this, directly," she said, in a tone of authority that had its instant effect. Miss Eustace drank it without a word, and then suffered herself to be led away, apparently lost to all that was going on. Julia however, heard the rain coming down in torrents, and was thankful for the change. She attempted to follow, but the door was gently closed by Mrs. Hargrave, with a smile that seemed to say, "It is my turn now:" and her only satisfaction was a parting glance from Beatrice, melancholy enough to haunt her dreams, but grateful enough to assure her her good intentions were all appreciated.

She went down stairs to Lord Eustace, and while waiting for the carriage to convey her home, found her best consolation, in baffling all his efforts to discover what had passed between his daughter and herself.



CHAPTER V.

HE Rector of Eastbury was not a man to be deterred from the fixed purpose of his soul by the discouraging frown of peer or peasant; and notwithstanding the indifference expressed by Lord Eustace on the subject, his committee was speedily formed, and a day fixed for its meeting at his house. Unluckily he had accepted the assistance of Sir John Seymour,—gratefully accepted it, as he had very little time to spare in riding after friends, and the worthy Baronet had more than he knew what to do with, in summer-time: and the consequence was, that when the list was filled up, and Lionel came to examine it, he found several names he knew nothing about, and several more he would gladly have omitted. Sir John, on being remonstrated with, pooh-poohed all his objections. One was the best fellow in the world to make a thing of the kind go off well: another had such a queer temper, it would affront him for life if left out; another was so ready with his pen in casting up accounts; another—"You don't object to Richard Durant, Revis? do you? I understood you were old college chums; I believe he attributes all your success in life to the circumstance."

"We have not met for some time," said Lionel, stooping over the list with a knitted brow.

"Then it is high time you should; I like to see old friendships revived: you shall dine together here, (they were in the library at the Lodge) and crack your undergraduate jokes over some of my best port, that you shall! don't say a word, my dear fellow—all the pleasure in life."

Lady Seymour glanced across the table at the Rector's face, and was rather pleased than otherwise to see he could look "put out" like other people. She said nothing, however, till he was gone, then having first ascertained there was no chance of his returning unexpectedly, congratulated Sir John on his happy talent of bringing friends together. "If I do not mistake," she said, "this Richard Durant and Lionel Revis were rivals and opponents from the first hour they met, at school first, and afterwards at college; no wonder he looks so pleased to have him on committee.

"Pooh, my dear, rivals? all men are rivals at College, but that does not make them a bit the less friends: look at me and Jack Middleton—did not he beat me hollow in everything but fly-fishing, and did you ever know me not delighted to see him at dinner?"

"At dinner, true," said Lady Seymour, drily, "but you were not over pleased when he borrowed your horse."

"Pleased? no—how should I be? a better fellow never breathed, but he knows about as much of riding as a baby. I mounted him *once*, and he spoiled my best hack."

"And Mr. Durant may spoil Mr. Revis's best committee," said Lady Seymour, "however it is your affair, not mine."

Lady Seymour was not mistaken: Revis and Durant had been the Pitt and Fox of their school, and had tra-

velled parallel in the highway of learning, without ever touching in friendship. Both were ambitious, both were energetic; but Lionel's brilliant qualities gave him the continual superiority:—try for what they might, he carried away the prize and the renown, and was first in the classes and leader in the playground, while the other was never more than second. The effect of this on an irritable mind, had been to engender an intense dislike on the part of young Durant to his successful compeer: they had never quarrelled, thanks to Lionel's high principles, but they never met with pleasure, and since the hour when they parted at college, had not joined company at all.

"Come with me into the garden, Julia," continued Lady Seymour, "bring my basket, and help me cut the roses, and I will tell you something to interest you about your friend Mr. Revis." Julia obeyed with alacrity; Lady Seymour walked to and fro on the lawn, from garden plot to parterre, filling her basket with the dead roses, and laying plans for improvements next year; but the promised anecdote seemed slow in coming forth. Julia at last ventured to refresh her memory, observing Lord Eustace had hinted something about Mr. Revis's giving up a fortune to enter the church, and had called it "enthusiasm."

"Meaning foolishness, of course," returned Lady Seymour, "such an instance of zeal would be rather too much for his Lordship, no doubt: but the fact is true nevertheless: and it is a trait of character after your own heart, Julia, so I will tell it you. Mr. Revis's father was, I am sorry to say, by no means so respectable an individual as himself: it is pretty well known, so there is no great stretch of gossip in telling you: he was literary and

scientific; a polished man of fashion; the idol of society at one time, till he took to gambling, poor creature; and for years led that dreadful life called 'going down hill,' than which nothing ever appears to me more appalling:—powers, strength, ability, moral perception, all deteriorating day by day, without the possibility, because without the will to draw back! So he lived; so he died; when Lionel was a boy, fighting his battles with Richard Durant at Dr. Hooper's: and his widow, (our rector was not happy in his parents) a weak, silly woman, whose want of intellect had partly driven him into dangerous society, followed him two years afterwards; having spent in folly and dress all that had been rescued from her husband's plunderers. Lionel's only sister died in childhood, and he was left alone of his branch; quite a pathetic situation for your next romance, Julia. Well, he has two uncles, who up to this period had seen very little of him; they were always repulsed by Mrs. Revis, and the elder is a sporting baronet in the north, who never came near town but for the Derby or Ascot; and the other, then Dr. Edmund Revis, now our respected Bishop, had been living abroad for his health. These brothers met after a long separation; as unlike in every respect as your two friends, Miss Eustace, and Jane Barnard; and agreed something must be done for their orphan nephew, so into a post-chaise they got, and away to Dr. Hooper's. Sir Geoffrey, an athletic, sunburnt sportsman, with a florid face and ringing laugh; Dr. Edmund, small, thin, and pale, with his quiet deliberate voice and decorous manner; could any pair be so ill-assorted? yet they are, I believe, sincerely attached, and though the Bishop at heart disapproves of half his brother does, he will never allow any-

body to find fault with him but himself. They were shown into Dr. Hooper's study, and the Bishop, from whom I heard the story, amused me with his description of their interview with that eccentric, but good-hearted personage; how he sat taking snuff, and quoting classics, and discoursing on education and politics; but never a word that they wanted to hear about their nephew; the snuff disturbing the clerical brother, as much as the Latin and Greek did the sporting one. At last he proposed they should see the school, and without waiting for reply, marched out before them, clapped an old grey Scotch cap on his bald head, and took them down a shrubbery alongside of the play-ground wall, to a gate, where they could enjoy the sight of the noisy urchins in the full enjoyment of a half-holiday. The master explained to his guests that when he appeared there, it was in strict incognito, and that he made a point of overlooking whatever he happened to see, provided it was no heinous offence. The boys seemed quite used to it, and took no notice of him whatever: they were deep in what appeared to the visitors neither more nor less than a pitched battle. 'No cricket!' cried Sir Geoffrey, 'no marbles, no kites! what are all the youngsters about?'

"'They are playing a favourite game of the Trojan war,' explained Dr. Hooper triumphantly, (I believe he called it by some Latin name, but the Bishop favoured me with a translation,) and he went on to explain, that with the view of encouraging classic taste, he patronised every game connected with the great poets; had been at some expense in procuring them a wooden horse for the second book of the Æneid, and persuaded them to substitute for Guy Fawkes the vanquishing of the Cyclop in the Odyssey.

'The construction of the Cyclop,' he said, 'is a favourite amusement for weeks before hand, and I connive at his making a bonfire afterwards, though contrary to classical authority to give him the honours of a funeral pile.

"'Abominable,' grumbled Sir Geoffrey, 'to exchange one of our oldest Protestant institutions for a one-eyed Pagan cannibal! I hope my nephew is party to nothing of the kind.' Dr. Hooper put his hand to his mouth, and shouted 'Warner!' A boy ran up immediately. 'Who makes the best Cyclop among you?' The boy's grin was pleasant to see, 'No one can do it like the Prince, sir.'

"'Like who?' asked the uncles: but the master sent off the boy before he could explain: and called another. 'Who is your best cricketer now, Simmons?'

"'Prince, sir, always.' 'What is going on now?' 'Troy, sir, but they won't do it right.' 'They won't? I will soon know the reason why: what is it?' 'It is Prince's fault, sir, he won't give in.' 'Why, what is Prince? he knows all about it better than most of you.' 'He is Hector, sir, and Achilles is come to kill him, but he can't; and we're afraid he'll thrash Achilles.' 'I will soon see that;' quoth the learned doctor, and forthwith he summons Prince, who makes his appearance, all hot and dusty from the fight: a slight, well-made, keen looking lad, with fine features and hair, and eyes like those of a hawk, the Bishop said, who made a bow, and stood panting a little with his exertions. 'Well, sir!' said his master, 'what do you mean by this? how dare you thrash Achilles, and spoil the whole structure of an immortal poem?' 'I couldn't help it, sir; he tried to thrash *me.*' 'Of course, and it is your duty to be thrashed, if you are Hector, and if Achilles does not, I will: I have no idea of your mislead-

ing your young companions in that way. Make a bow to these gentlemen, and ask if they are not ashamed of their nephew.'

"And this was his introduction to his guardians; for this rebellious Hector, who had acquired the nickname of Prince Prettyman, for his bright hair and complexion, was young Lionel Revis himself; the Achilles in question being his friend Richard Durant. His feelings on recognising his uncles were so warm as to win both their hearts at once, and they simultaneously agreed he should be as their own son: but here lay the difficulty; each wanted to bring him up his own way: Sir Geoffrey vowed so spirited a lad should be plagued no more with books, but breathe the fresh northern air, and learn to ride to hounds, and in time to manage the estate and keep the pack: Dr. Revis marked the intellect lying in the eye, and brow and mouth, and yearned to see him crowned with college honours: the master was appealed to. Was Lionel adapted for a country squire? 'Admirably.' 'Would he make a good clergyman?' 'No doubt of it.' 'Could he ride?' 'Capitally.' 'Has he a taste for elocution?' 'Was the best orator in the school.' It was impossible to decide on such opposing authorities; but they agreed in carrying the boy away at once, and letting him have a trial at their houses separately. The master's last words on the subject, were, 'Wherever you place that boy, he will take the lead, mind that: he will either do immense good or immense evil; take care how you bring him up.' The Bishop told me it was touching to see the little boys cling round their favourite Prince Prettyman as he took leave; lamenting that now he was gone, Durant would be captain and bully them all. He had been champion-general to

all the little ones, and no one could fill his place. Hector departed, who would be left to guard the Scæan Gate, or keep Achilles in order?

"Well, my dear, I was about to apologize for my long story, but I see you begin to look interested: hold the basket straight, or you will let all the dead leaves fall on the turf. The boy was taken to the family estate in the North, and Dr. Revis, soon after receiving his bishopric, saw nothing of his nephew for a long time: he corresponded with him, and gave him good advice, but they did not meet; I fancy Sir Geoffrey took care of that. At last, the Bishop finding himself unexpectedly able to take a holiday like other people, started for the North without giving notice of his arrival. It was winter, the height of the hunting season, and of course neither Sir Geoffrey nor the young squire were at home. An old servant of the family did the honours to the Bishop, whom, as Master Edmund, he had taught to ride, and boasted pretty freely of young squire Lionel, as the finest seat on horseback in the country; such determination, such courage, such a cool head and light hand—all he wanted, continued the aged Nimrod, with a gentle shake of his grey hairs—all he wanted was a little *more real love for sport.* The Bishop brightened amazingly at this, and cross-examining his old acquaintance, came to the belief that most of the boy's exploits were performed to win his uncle's approbation, but that at heart his taste lay otherwise. He persuaded him to show him into his nephew's room; and there, among fishing-tackle, foxes' tails, whips, foils, and what not, were stowed carefully away all his school-books, and several others he had gleaned from his uncle's library, bearing evident tokens of recent and familiar use. The

old man explained that in the evening, when any other young gentleman would be discussing the day's sport with the squires down stairs, Master Lionel used to come up here, and sit over his books till it was quite late, and he having been up to covert at five, and ridden all day long. 'You know, my Lord, it won't do; he can't be two things at once, and it's a rare pity, only Sir Geoffrey has never noticed it, so it won't do for such as me.'

"You may imagine the secret delight of the Bishop at all this. I suspect, though I did not tell him so, there was a mixture of human nature in his emotions, and the pleasure at the intellectual preference of his nephew, must have been blended with a touch of self-satisfaction, at his coming victory over his brother. However that may be, they all met, and eager was the commendation Sir Geoffrey bestowed on his favourite's proficiency in all manly exercises. His name was known already in the sporting annals of the North, and a long career of sylvan fame seemed opening before him. But the Bishop read something about the lad's eye and lip that encouraged him to take him aside, and urge him to the strict disclosure of his hopes and wishes; and then, he confessed, that the desire of pleasing his kind uncle had made him devote himself to sport as a business, doing his utmost to excel; but that he had worked at his books at all his leisure hours, and that the wish dearest to his heart was to go to college and enter the Church. It was a blow to good Sir Geoffrey when this was revealed to him: he did not reproach the poor lad, who was miserable at being the cause of his disappointment; he did not oppose his wishes, only told him it was quite impossible a clergyman should be his heir, as the stable and pack must be kept up, and

if he entered the Church he must give up all his prospects. The boy's answer was characteristic. 'What an honour to be able at my age to give up prospects for the sake of doing good!' He went to college, took a first-rate degree, and I believe was the cause of Mr. Durant's taking none whatever. Their boyish rivalry was revived at Cambridge; and Durant, finding he had no chance of equalling Revis, refused to stand the examination. Now you know the particulars, Julia; and if you did not think Mr. Revis a hero before, of course you do now."

"And knowing all this, mamma, you could doubt his being sincere?"

"Not exactly; no, no: he was sincere enough in wishing to enter the Church; and having a Bishop for his uncle, it was no very hazardous sacrifice after all."

Such, in truth, had been the early vicissitudes of the life of Lionel Revis: to the influence whereof some points in his character might be traced. Happy was it for him that, from his childhood, he had loved his God, whose grace was sufficient to guard him in the midst of such various temptations. Whatever Lady Seymour's motive was in telling her enthusiastic daughter all this, its effect, as may be imagined, was to make her admire him more than ever, and he was present to her thoughts, with little intermission, for the rest of the afternoon.

From the moment the Rector saw of what materials his committee was to be composed, his hopes of its utility considerably fell; however, it was too late for any change, and all he could do was to prepare a good luncheon for them, and hope the best. His dining-room, commanding a beautiful view of the valley and the river, and the woods of Eustace Hall, was early and carefully arranged by

Marian Mayflower and her obedient spouse; and, during the operation, they were honoured by a call from Mr. Gotham, bringing a note for the Rector. He cast an approving eye over the arrangement of the chairs, and smiled with his usual benignity. "It must, nevertheless, Mrs. Mayflower," he said, after a thoughtful silence, "be a subject of the most heartfelt regret, that circumstances, whatever they may be, have deprived the honourable assembly, so soon to congregate on such a benevolent mission, of the august countenance of my Lord Eustace. It is on occasions such as these, as my late master, the Doctor, used to say, that the counsel of the aristocracy is of the utmost importance."

"And pray of what importance on any occasion is my lord's opinion compared with Mr. Revis's?" asked May sharply, "if my lord is so high and grand he won't trouble his head about the poor, he may stay away, and welcome, with all my heart; and I hope his conscience will let him sleep easy."

"You mistake his Lordship, Mrs. Mayflower; it is not the first time by many that I have had the honour of coming in contact with him: he was a frequent visitor of my late respected master, Dr. Grantley, and behaved, I must always do him the justice to say, with true greatness of mind, as became his elevated station."

"Greatness of mind, hey?" said Marian, "well, that's a new quality in a patient, but a capital one as regards the Doctor's man, Mr. Gotham, if I understand what you mean. He never gave trouble without paying for it."

"You have judged discreetly, Mrs. Mayflower; his presents were always most munificent, not only to the servants, but to my respected master himself, who, with

eccentric appearance of indifference, used to observe, on the receipt of the same, "Every man has his wage, Gotham; every man has his wage." "I have often," continued the butler, "pondered in solitude on the latent meaning of this doubtless excellent jest, but it has hitherto eluded all research."

"Not hard to guess, I fancy," said May, "the Doctor had done something for my lord; no good, I'll be bound; and my lord feed the household from master to man, to keep all quiet."

The door had opened quietly without their being aware of an auditor, but May turning round to leave the room, discovered Mrs. Barnard, and made her a curtsey of most respectful defiance. "Do not let me disturb you, Marian, I beg," said the lady, "I only came to visit poor Mrs. Wortley; and perhaps," glancing keenly all around "perhaps I could be of some use in furthering the arrangements for the committee."

"Thank you, ma'am," said May, "but everything is arranged, if you please."

"The luncheon, Marian? where do you intend it to be? this room will grow so close, after all the gentlemen have been here for a couple of hours. What do you say to its being laid out at my house? It could soon be fetched over; no trouble whatever, and my parlour quite at your master's service. Nothing is so pleasant as this interchange of neighbourly offices."

"I know you find it so, ma'am," said May, with provoking imperturbability, "but I believe my master is too well accustomed to visitors to think of entertaining them at another person's house. Shall I show you to Mrs. Wortley's room, ma'am?" Mrs. Barnard had no resource

but to go, but her purpose of securing a share of the Rector's hospitality was not the less fixed for being baffled. May divined her plan. "I must trouble you, ma'am, not to stay too long with her," she said as she laid her hand on the door, "the doctor forbade much talking."

"You may trust to me," said Mrs. Barnard.

"Trust?" thought May, "as far as I see you, in broad daylight, with spectacles on, perhaps I may. Here, Mrs. Wortley," she added aloud, "here is a lady come to see you."

"Very anxious to know if you are better," added Mrs. Barnard, softly, as she approached the sick woman's bed; who looked up at her with an expression of indifference, that seldom left her hard weather-beaten features. "Anxious, are you, ma'am? I'm much obliged, I'm sure; they say I'm better, so I suppose I am; better off at least than when you saw me last."

"Come, that is the first gracious word I've had yet," said May, good humouredly, "I'll go before you change your mind, neighbour. May I trouble you, ma'am, if she wants anything, to let me know, and if you please not to tire her with talking." Mrs. Barnard promised, and when Marian was gone, took a chair by the sick woman's side, with an air of the deepest sympathy. Mrs. Wortley's features were large and masculine, which the lines of suffering and weakness had sharpened instead of softening; and there was very little favour in the glance she gave her guest. "They say the fire was all your fault, Mrs. Barnard," was her first remark. Mrs. Barnard indignantly protested. "Yes, they say it was owing to Mrs. Plowden's little girl falling asleep, and setting her pinafore on fire, while her mother was at your house,

and that you kept her there two hours beyond her usual time; that's what they say; perhaps it ain't true."

"I hope," said Mrs. Barnard, "I may employ my poor neighbours without being answerable for all that happens in their absence. What would Mrs. Plowden do without work?"

"Why, if she ain't paid, she's as well at home, I think." There was a pause. "Have you brought me some money?" was the next sharp demand.

"Money, my good soul? oh, you mean for those little trinkets. My daughters are trying to dispose of them for you among their young friends; be quite easy on that score. I understood too, that Miss Eustace had sent you something, did I not?"

The woman's eye glared on her in wonder, and her white lips moved, but no sound issued forth: Mrs. Barnard gave her some barley water, and she was then able to repeat faintly, "Miss Eustace?"

"Yes, from the Hall: you received it, of course; did no one tell you who sent it?"

"Miss Eustace send me money?" repeated the woman, "how did she know I was here? who could have told her?"

"Your name was mentioned among the sufferers from the fire, and Miss Eustace gave Miss Seymour a sovereign for you," continued Mrs. Barnard, anxious to impress on the patient's memory, that she could be in no want of funds. The latter lay in silence for some time, as if exhausted, while her visitor continued to expatiate on the probability of Miss Eustace doing a great deal more for her; much more than her limited means would possibly admit of: and hinted on a degree of influence which she (Mrs. B.) might be induced to exert on her behalf: till

she was interrupted by Mrs. Wortley. "You know them both then?"

"Ye-e-s." Mrs. Barnard hardly knew what to say.

"Are they still in this neighbourhood?"

"Of course, why their home is at the great Hall: have you not heard of it?"

"I did not know it was theirs," said the woman, turning with evident difficulty and her face contracting with pain, "and but for my broken leg, should have been out of their way by this time. Will you give a message to Miss Eustace for me?"

Mrs. Barnard hesitated. "It won't be much trouble as you see them so often; if it is, pay yourself out of the value of those trinkets you've got of mine."

"Pay myself, Mrs. Wortley, what can you mean? the trinkets though, are rather dear, I must confess."

"Take a third off the price, then," said the woman, coolly, "and now do my message." Mrs. Barnard drew near in some confusion, mixed with curiosity. "Go to Miss Eustace; Miss Beatrice, I mean, my lord's only daughter: and when she is quite alone with you, tell her I want to see her. You had better speak of me as nurse Adams: she will know that name best: she will come you may depend. Tell no one else but herself. I am very tired now, ma'am, and shall be much obliged if you'll go; no offence."

"No offence," repeated Mrs. Barnard to herself, as she left the room, "impertinent creature! if it was not for the trinkets—but they *are* very pretty, and a great bargain, especially if she takes off a third of what she asked at first; and there's no hurry about paying her. It was abominable to turn me out of her room; I will not leave

the house just yet, I vow: oh, by good luck here comes our good easy Rector, whom I can manage as I please. Just been visiting your poor invalid, Mr. Revis," as Lionel came bounding up the staircase, "but she is too tired for any more conversation, and I feel tired myself: may I sit a minute in your study, and have a glass of water?" Lionel's politeness was instantly on the alert: he handed her down to the study, though it was very inconvenient to spare it; fetched her wine and water, and biscuits and fruit, and begged she would not stir till quite rested and refreshed. "I shall be obliged to leave you," he said, rejoicing hospitably at the zest with which she accepted all his attentions, "to receive the committee, but if you will ring for anything you want, Mrs. Barnard . . . "

"May I take the liberty of writing a letter at your table?" asked the modest lady, who grudged the supply of unappropriated stationery displayed temptingly to her view.

"As many as you please," returned Lionel, setting note paper, pens and ink in methodical order, ready for use; he had a variety of little ornamental nicknacks for the writing table; blotting books, penwipers, and what not, the gifts of disconsolate admirers; and the most elegant were set before his guest. As soon as he was gone, she threw herself back in his armchair, (a legacy from an old lady,) and looked round the apartment with much envy and discontent. "How comfortable I could make this house for ourselves! it is too bad that he does not give it up to us: a bachelor cannot use a quarter of it, and if he was half the self-denying saint he professes, he would do so. This is some of that old Madeira of the Bishop's: I thought we had had the last bottle. Marian took it out

for the committee, I suppose—what horrid extravagance! and it is so good for Jane; I must try and get her a little more of it, against those Myrton people come to drink tea. Well, now for my correspondents; capital opportunity this; I will clear off all my old scores."

If anything would make letter writing a delight, it would be such a situation as this lady was now occupying with the privilege of using the excellent stationery of another, even to his postage stamps: and cheered by the recollection, Mrs. Barnard wrote off sheet after sheet to her numerous correspondents, sealing them conspicuously with a large seal, bearing the Revis' arms, which lay on the table. These lighter duties accomplished, she took a larger sheet and began a letter, into which we must take the liberty of a stolen glance, as it may assist our comprehension of her powers of generalship.

To Mrs. John Bellamy, S . . . . Devon.

MY DEAR JEMIMA.—Though I have so long delayed writing, you have not been absent from my thoughts; my heart, in the midst of its many pressing, often harassing duties, rests refreshingly on the memory of your happy circle, especially yourself and my dear John, on whose abilities I reflect with pleasure, and whose assistance I am about to invoke. Not pecuniary assistance; far, far from it! we are content with a little, and the cheerful happiness of our little parsonage is enough for me; though it costs me many a toilsome hour to provide comforts for all my beloved ones. I am writing at the rectory, where I am often obliged to be; Mr. Revis having neither wife nor sister, considers me his right hand; and it is no light addition to my labours, to be counsellor

general to an inexperienced, but well-meaning young man. I shrink from nothing; visit the sick and look after the schools, and do all I can, and am fain to believe they would be puzzled at times what to do without me. A committee about the poor is sitting now in this very house, and they keep me here as a reference whenever any disputed point arises. A singular circumstance has occurred lately, on which I want dear clever John's advice and help."

Mrs. Barnard here related the loss of Lord Eustace's note book as she had heard it from Miss Lloyd and Jane: and then proceeded; "A porter on the railway at Myrton, whom I had in my poor way been able to relieve in distress, found this book, and brought it to me for advice. I took it myself to the Hall, and, to my surprise, was received by a lady, Miss Eustace's confidential friend and companion, in whom I recognised an old acquaintance. Do not you remember, several summers ago, when I and my girls were with you at S.., our seeing Miss Eustace and Mrs. Hargrave driving about on the sands, with a delicate looking boy, who soon afterwards died quite suddenly? I am sure you will remember this, when I remind you of the frightful thunderstorms we had that season, and of our hearing afterwards that Miss Eustace was not expected to live. Live however she did, for she is at the Hall at present, and between ourselves, Priscilla Hargrave appears to be completely mistress, both of the Hall and its noble inmates. She was very civil, and all that; but my endeavours to obtain a reward (for my poor porter of course) were fruitless: Lord Eustace has the queerest temper in the world, and she told me if he thought his memorandums had passed through my hands, he would

take such a dislike to us all as would ruin us. She hinted that he had his eye on Mr. Barnard already: and as he has loads of preferment in his gift, this was enough, and I left the book, and came away. Now this was not liberal treatment, but I am even with them both: a slip of paper fell out of the book when I opened it, of which I enclose you a copy. "Mem. Bellamy—solicitor to late Dr. G. — Street, Exeter: to find Miss G.: enquire for papers: Miss G. last heard of somewhere in Devon.'

"Now, I heard just now from an old servant of Dr. Grantley (evidently the Dr. G.) that Lord Eustace was in the constant habit of calling on the Doctor in town, and made him munificent presents, which the Doctor used to call his wages. My poor brother James, as John well knows, must be the Bellamy in question; but he is, alas! no more. Put all this together, and I think my cute cousin John will see there is enough inducement for a little research, which *may* bring some valuable secret to light, that will benefit us all. We all share the secret, whatever it be, so of course the benefits must be mutual. Let John hunt up Miss Grantley without delay: she must be an old woman now; and if she was in Devonshire lately, will hardly be travelling at her time of life. I shall anxiously wait your reply. I could not disappoint my poor porter, so was obliged to remunerate him from my own pocket: rather hard upon me; but I prefer pinching myself to grieving the poor."

The reader will now be at no loss to imagine how the said note book happened to fall out of Miss Eustace's work-box: Mrs. Hargrave had not forgiven her last offence, and chose this as the readiest way of punishment.

Mrs. Barnard made a slight mistake with regard to her "poor porter," as it was only by a bribe she obtained his services through the mediation of her handmaid Anne; and the bribe itself was extracted under specious pretences from the purse of Jane. But these slight inaccuracies by no means reflect on Mrs. Barnard's high character, which the above epistle so amply sets forth.

Lionel walked up and down in his dining room, angry with himself for dreading the arrival of Richard Durant, yet unable to shake off the sensation of annoyance. If it has ever happened to any one to be blest with an acquaintance who, without coming to an open breach with you, never offers to do you a friendly turn: who looks sarcastically at your house, sneers at your speeches, gives you no credit for your good intentions, and implies you are no better than anybody else; such an one can sympathise with our good Rector, when anxiously desiring to be in charity with all men, he could not help remembering the old provocations that had so often vexed his boyhood. To and fro he walked with quick impetuous steps that mightily disturbed his handmaid in the kitchen, who after pausing in her labours to listen awhile, observed to May, "What a wonderful fine sermon we shall sit under next Sunday. I lived once with a gentleman who wrote a book, and whenever he walked overhead in that way, his man used to say to me, 'Cook, there goes a chapter.' It's awful the way he's walking: it must be a funeral discourse."

The Committee began to arrive before May could answer; Sir John Seymour coming last, under the happy delusion that he was before his time. He rubbed his hands in exultation as he glanced round the room, and again and again congratulated Lionel and Durant on this

auspicious meeting. They shook hands—politely, not cordially, and their eyes met. Durant's were cool and satirical; Lionel's grave and troubled: the former turned round to two or three young men who accompanied him (all invited by Sir John) and gave them a private sign of what he meant to do, which was to invite the Baronet to take the chair. Their design of slighting Lionel was however frustrated, by the indignation of Sir John, who roundly declared no one could or should fill that chair but the Rector, whose gallantry had saved so many lives; and being seconded by the majority, Mr. Durant and his allies were forced to acquiesce. The business of the meeting was then explained by Lionel in a few brief energetic sentences, and the proposal made for a subscription, which led to the following debate.

A Member of the Committee. (With an eye to being a Member of the House.) "I thought I heard something, gentlemen, about Lord Eustace withholding his approval from this proceeding of ours: I submit that no steps be taken which may displease his Lordship."

Sir John. "Now, Hambleton, that is a stroke of canvassing on your part: but it won't do: if Parliament dissolves, Lord Eustace has a member of his own to bring in; so don't let your sovereigns burn your pocket on that account."

The Rector. "We are far from wishing to offend his Lordship; but I see no reasonable ground of offence to anybody in assisting our poor neighbours."

Mr. Durant. "Is it necessary that the ground of the offence should be *reasonable* to make it worth considering?"

The Rector. "To make it interfere with a duty, certainly."

Mr. Durant. "I was not aware that it was a duty to make good all losses suffered by fire: I submit that our motto be, "Every Christian his neighbour's Fire Insurance." (*A laugh.*)

The Rector. "I would propose as an amendment, "Every Christian his neighbour's brother," and must remind the meeting that we are met more to act than talk."

This had the desired effect, and the subscription list being prepared, Mr. Lloyd took down the names, and Mr. Barnard received the donations, which were tolerably liberal, and Lionel took the opportunity of putting in a word for the other charitable institutions of the parish which were somewhat low in point of funds. He also adverted strongly to the desecration of the Sabbath, to which the village was too much addicted, and especially the Sunday cricketing, which he had a plan for stopping altogether.

Mr. Durant. "Then I must differ from you at once, Mr. Chairman."

The Rector. "Unheard, Mr. Durant?"

Mr. Durant. "I distinctly heard you remark, sir, you would cut off the Sunday amusement of the working men. I hold such doctrine in abhorrence. Why should they not play cricket, as well as go to the public-house? Or if you shut that up too, as doubtless you would, why must they be forced to go to church, and sit listening to sermons, which though universally applauded for eloquence, must be rather too refined a pleasure for them?"

The Rector. "Because to be happy in this world, there is but one way for both rich and poor: and that is, the love and service of the God who made, who loves, who sympathizes with all; and whom no one ever yet

repented having chosen for his portion. The evils of the Sunday cricket playing are many; I have seen numerous instances. The worship of God is set aside for every slight excuse, and the evening closes at the public house. This is Sabbath breaking, and it must be stopped."

Mr. Lloyd. "Well done, Greatheart! you are dealing with Giant Maul, who was wont to spoil young pilgrims with sophistry."

Sir John. "But, my good friend, how do you mean to remedy the evil? All Eastbury will be up in arms."

The Rector. "I propose to form a cricket club for the men; to take the presidency myself, and invite as many gentlemen as patronise the game to become members: to hire a meadow next to one of my fields for their game, instead of the present cricket-ground, which is a very bad one, and to give it to them free, on the condition of its being closed on Sunday. I would propose presenting the club with an occasional present of bats and stumps, and such needful appendages, and making it an attraction to the men to join: and drawing up rules for them, by which all drinking and gambling may be discountenanced: also to give them a feast once a year, at which the gentry should be present, so as to create a feeling of goodwill and sympathy on the subject; in all which, gentlemen, I shall hope for your co-operation. You may think it a puerile object, and that it is of little consequence to you and your families how Jack Brown and Tom Smith spend their Sunday evenings:—I tell you it never was so morally; it has ceased to be so politically:—if the minds of the people grow callous to holy things, we shall all reap the fruits: there are places of resort—I have seen them, within hearing of our own Sabbath-bells, where the ill-

educated and the ungodly meet, Sunday after Sunday, to plot against the well being of society, and heat their brains with the dangerous visions of ignorance. If society is to be safe, gentlemen, it must be religious: the rich and the poor must meet in their Maker's house, if they are to act in co-operation in the world: stronger to rule their untrained passions, will be found the ties of sympathy and association, than the arm of the soldier, or the voice of the magistrate. Give them holy Sundays, where they may taste of heavenly things, and a forward step will be taken towards hindering their unlawful desire for power."

A stout Gentleman (with a soul not quite proportioned to its corporeal appendage). "Bless my heart, Mr. Revis! do you mean to say there are Chartists in our neighbourhood? Do, for goodness sake, draw up a request for the immediate presence of a body of military: and — and — let a good strong body of special constables be sworn in; and tell them not to stick at a trifle, but hit *home* if necessary. I thought I saw several very ill looking fellows prowling about my house last week."

Mr. Durant. "So we have learnt something to-day, gentlemen, by coming here: that Chartism is to be put down by Religion, and Religion built up by a new cricket ground, and a bat and stumps. The idea is novel, at least."

Sir John (unable to refrain from a pun, even when it is thread-bare). "And *striking* too, as far as cricket is concerned."

The Rector (good humouredly). "You may enjoy your wit, gentlemen, if you feel so disposed. I found this a cricketing parish; enthusiastic about it to a degree that I

had never met with. It were scarcely wise, or kind to thwart them in their favourite amusement: and if we can keep them in proper bounds by persuasion and sympathy, I must think it is well worth a little trouble, and even a little misconstruction."

The Stout Member. "But the Chartists, Mr. Revis—what were you saying about them?"

The Rector. "Only this, sir: that meetings *are* held in the neighbourhood, and a spirit of discontent is abroad, which, for all our sakes, we must endeavour to dissipate."

Sir John. "True, every word; and Lord Eustace is doing his best to make things worse."

Mr. Hambleton. "Let me beg, that no mention be made of his Lordship in any way that might give offence."

Sir John (looking round). "Mr. Chairman, have you a reporter hid in your cellaret, that we must be so careful of our speeches?"

Mr. Durant (aside to a friend). "To judge by the chairman's loquacity, I should say he has. He will let no one speak but himself."

The Rector. "Let me ask your indulgence, gentlemen, to a few more observations. I am addressing landlords, husbands, fathers of families, men of authority and influence: and as such I make my appeal to you. There is a work given us to do towards our poor brethren; they are to be sought, to be cared for, to be assisted, fed, clothed, educated; in short, acknowledged as brethren, and brought to love us as such. Much in this way has been done; much more remains to do,—and very much by the ladies of our community. If they, who have so marked an influence on society, would one and all join with us in the work, and by kindness, sympathy, and counsel show the

poor, the rich *do* feel for and love them, the minister would find his preaching more efficient, and the soldier's occupation rust in his hand. If every landlord would consider this to his tenantry; every master to his servants; every man to his fellow man; every one mend one by example, and warning and entreaty, there would grow up a bond of brotherhood among us, as potent in bringing forth good, as experience has proved it to be in evil."

Mr. Durant (impatiently). "Now, really, my dear Mr. Chairman, you are going too fast: at least, I must plead inability to follow you. In the first place I see no use in so much preaching to the lower classes: give them higher wages, and as much soup and coals as you please, but do let them enjoy a little of life, without cramming them with tracts, and smothering them with Bibles. It is rather like the Mendicity plan, where a bason of gruel is earned only by breaking a bushel of stones."

The Rector. "On this point I must not be misunderstood. I know but one foundation for usefulness, and that is the fear and love of God. I will not put off my poor brother with meat that perisheth, when I have the bread of life in my right hand. I will not teach him to care only for his body, when the blood of his soul will be required of me. I will not suffer him to keep his eyes fixed on the thorns and stones of his hard and weary pilgrimage, when I have it in my power to show him his coming rest. God forbid I should! When it is proved to me that there is one Gospel for the rich and another for the poor; that heaven and earth are given to the one, and neither to the other, I will cease to enforce the duty of leading our poor brethren in the path of life. Till then, it is encumbent on me to remind you all that charity,

true charity, both to body and soul, is looked for, is required at your hands. To God and your country are you accountable; let it be yours to stand clear before both."

Durant was silenced by the energy of Lionel's voice, and quelled by the light of his eyes; and he made no more opposition at the time. Lionel carried all his points, as he always did, and the meeting closed with much unanimity. The luncheon was done ample justice to: and it may gratify those who are interested in the success of ingenuity, to hear that Mrs. Barnard, happening to pass through the hall just as they sat down, was perceived by Sir John, and persuaded with a little difficulty to honour them with her presence; to the bitter mortification of May.

It is not to be supposed, by any who have observed the usual effects of all plans for the keeping of the Sabbath, that Lionel's scheme was carried out without causing discontent. Long and high were the debates to which it gave rise; in the alehouse, and the barber's shop, and the blacksmith's forge, and the church-yard, and all other points of parochial assemblage. What? the parish of Eastbury, renowned all over England, at least in its own opinion, for its cricketing skill, which had two or three matches pending already with neighbouring rivals, none of whom were ruled by so strict a pastor, to give up its Sunday practice, and allow A, and B, and C, and all other opponents, to keep it on, and meet them under that disadvantage? It was not to be thought of for a moment: Mr. Revis must be spoke with; and a deputation of the chosen eleven waited for him accordingly in a lane, to remonstrate on the plan, gathered round his horse, and

held an argument with him, but not a long one: his eye, and his smile, and his voice were not to be withstood, and they were fain to yield with a good grace, and own he most likely knew best. He followed up the advantage, visited them in their homes, won their mothers and wives to his side, and put down opposition in the most wonderful manner, without making anybody feel that they were defeated. Sir John marvelled, Durant sneered, Lady Seymour smiled at his success, Lady Lovel rejoiced quietly—Julia with exultation; Mrs. Lee attributed all to her counsel, and Mrs. Barnard hinted on the beneficial effect of her influence: but, however this might be, Sunday cricketing became at once out of fashion in Eastbury; the new club was in everybody's mouth; the Rector spurred on the arrangements, and drew up the rules, and prepared the new piece of ground, as if it had been for some important field-day, and on the following Sunday announced his intention of giving an additional service on the Sabbath evenings—a series of plain lectures for the young men—which was received with an amount of complacency, that showed the strong fascination his preaching had on their minds.

There were, in fact, at this period, two distinct influences at work among the people of that neighbourhood: loyalty to their popular Rector, and discontent with every one else. The landlords were in general disfavour; the town of Myrton was a nucleus of Chartism and agitation; and societies of every description were rapidly forming for miles round. The agency of Mr. Hargrave had long been detested, and Lord Eustace was not the man to counteract its effect. A series of petty grievances, accumulating for years past, had gradually assumed a

serious aspect in the eyes of the people, and a cloud was already deepening overhead that threatened ruin both to themselves and him. The gentlemen knew "there were Chartists about;" but it had been said so often, they ceased to think it of consequence. Sir John, who never quarrelled with anybody, and let off half the culprits that came before him, treated every expression of concern as cowardice. His neighbours were content to have strong bars and bolts, and well-appointed servants, and let things take their chance; Lord Eustace, if the subject was mentioned, coolly declared his intention of turning out the first man he found with the slightest tendency to rebellious principles; and if there was any outbreak, a line from him would bring military enough to drive them like sheep. But Lionel Revis, in his constant, keen-sighted watch over the moods of his scattered charge, saw much to alarm, much to grieve him, and much to make him tremble at his own responsibility. To him they would speak freely, and in return listen willingly; in his ear they poured their murmurs, and received his persuasions, and not unseldom reproofs, with patience, and a sense of reliance on his goodwill; but of the rest of the gentry there was a gradually increasing distrust: their good offices were misconstrued, their charities received with contempt, their pride exaggerated, their neglect brooded over in sullenness; and many a dark hint thrown out, that the day was not far off, when the rich should be as low as the poor they despised. There was a regular system, too, that Lionel watched with uneasiness, and which, to any one else, might not have been discernible: an appearance of arrangement, of signals, of places of rendezvous, of joint-stock funds against times of

emergency, that made him feel as if some terrible monster was growing up beneath his eye, which he might keep subdued and tamed for the present, but which must, ere long, break every yoke, and burst every bond.

The story of the fire told both ways: endeared the Rector, and drew down execrations on the peer. When it became known, as it soon was, that Lord Eustace would do nothing for the sufferers, that he intended to build one good-sized house in the place of the ruined three, many a vow was made he should feel what it was to lose your homes; and Rogers, whose cottage was shortly after taken from him for disrespect to his landlord, became one of the most violent and revengeful of their leaders. Still the constant communication with Lionel kept them quiet; they felt his influence even in their secret plottings, and the habit of going to hear him preach led to many others, all tending the same desirable way; and it was still summer weather, and the harvest promising: so discontent was silent for a time.

Miss Eustace, though still under a cloud, was emancipated from durance sooner than she expected, and came, accompanied by Mrs. Hargrave, to return the visits paid her by Lady Seymour and Julia. It was a fine afternoon, and Lady Lovel was undergoing the process of being wheeled in a light garden-chair, about the grounds, by a succession of juvenile attendants, more zealous than skilful, enduring with smiling patience the various jolts and gyrations the vehicle took, beneath the panting exertions of George, and Eleanor, and little Charles; and, when she could bear it no longer, placidly observing, they had better rest a minute, and let Harry and Julia have a turn. Mrs. Hargrave must have been hard to

please, indeed, if she had found fault with her reception by Lady Seymour, who, with studied courtesy, engaged her in conversation, while Miss Eustace stepped out at the window, and joined the merry party on the lawn. All eyes turned on her as she approached. "What a very beautiful girl!" said Lady Lovel involuntarily. Julia flew to meet her, and asked if she heard what grand-mamma said. No, Miss Eustace was quite innocent on the subject, and rather anxious to be told, which so amused the children, as they clustered behind the garden-chair, to stare at the visitor undisturbed, that for the first ten minutes a half-choked giggle kept bursting out between every interval of the conversation. Miss Eustace's manner, though gentle even to timidity, had all the graceful ease of good-breeding; and in Lady Lovel were combined the politeness of the old school, with that frank benevolence, which reassures the most embarrassed: there was no difficulty, therefore, in the way of their mutual intercourse; and Julia, hardly knowing whether she was most anxious that Beatrice should admire her grandmamma, or grandmamma be pleased with Beatrice, stood by watching them both, and hushing the gigglers with very little success. Lady Lovel, in fact, was in some anxiety respecting the character of this young lady, who had made such an impression on her susceptible favourite, and used her utmost skill to draw her out; and Beatrice, unconscious of the process, conversed agreeably and sensibly, and convinced her judge she was, at any rate, well-read and intelligent. "It must be a great source of gratification to you," observed Lady Lovel, after testing her knowledge by a variety of well-put questions, "it must be a great source of gratification to you, when tired

of the bustle of the gay world, to be able to shut yourself up with your books, and feast on the boundless stores of history and philosophy, for which you seem to have so much taste."

"It *was*, once," said Beatrice, "but like every other pleasure, wearies at last."

"Are you weary already?" said Lady Lovel, smiling, "your hair is a few shades darker than mine, my dear, yet I can still take as much pleasure in Johnson and Alison, as if I could read without spectacles. What is it wearies you?"

Beatrice was silent for a few minutes, as if weighing the question. "I can scarcely tell," she said at last, "I can remember when study was my delight, when every new field of thought was like a discovered treasure; when I could feel my mind expanding day by day, and there was scarcely an object of nature, or an event in life, that did not add something to my store: but as I grew older, I felt the change: so many opposing lights are thrown on every subject, that distort instead of illuminating: there is not a great action in history on which a doubt or a depreciation is not thrown, nor a lofty character, against whom biography cannot find an indictment: the science on which we rely one year, is contradicted and disproved the next: the doctrines in which our childhood was trained, are all explained away, or turned upside down: truth, the object of all my research, seems to elude me the deeper I go; and like Bulwer's mystic philosopher, I find I have only studied sufficiently to see decay and corruption everywhere."

Lady Lovel quietly put on her spectacles, that she might see her face, and shook her head as she did so.

Miss Eustace, who had spoken as if thinking aloud, stood gazing far away over the landscape, yet as if she saw it not, and there was that in the thoughtful brow, and eye, which chilled the kind heart that watched her. She hesitated at first how to answer. " Corruption—yes, my dear, there is a principle of decay in everything earthly, we all know, though too apt to forget it: but as in nature, corruption itself is the parent of life, and the leaves that fall from our groves, and die and rot uncared for, nourish the ground on which they perish; and the seed you sow in the earth, before it can spring up, must die outwardly—so it is in the progression of the world, and the changes in the powers and sentiments of man. Error there is, and disappointment there is; in history and science as in everything else; but to those who watch for the hand of God, it is always visible, working wisdom from human blindness, and causing the wrath of man to praise him. In fact, my dear, Religion is the salt of knowledge, as well as of morality; and without it, there is only vexation of spirit in making or in reading books."

" And with it also, and at times the darker and the heavier for its presence," said Beatrice. Lady Lovel took her spectacles off again. " Who will wheel me on a little more into the shade?" All offered their services, Miss Eustace among the rest; Lady Lovel accepted only hers. " I am fastidious to-day," she said, smiling, " and must have like the fairy in Julia's song,

" All that's bright and beautiful to serve me at my need."

She soon regretted this, however, though only made from kind motives, for Miss Eustace had not wheeled the chair many yards, before she was obliged to stop, and

leaned against a tree, with a struggle for breath that was distressing to witness. Harry ran to support her, proud of the excuse, and hoping she would faint in his arms; and little Charles, at Julia's command, flew for some water. He was a very pretty boy, with long fair curls and a complexion fit for a reigning belle, and as he performed the little service with eager sympathy, and looked anxiously in her face all the time she was drinking, her attention became irresistibly attracted. She smiled at Lady Lovel's remorse and Julia's prescriptions, made light of the passing weakness, and began to talk with little Charles, evidently anxious to win him at any price, for he was allowed to open her watch, examine her gold châtelaine, play with all her trinkets, drop all her cards, and break the handle of her parasol, without a word of remonstrance. On the contrary, her voice and look seemed to grow softer and gentler with him every moment, and at last watching her opportunity, she put her arm round his sturdy waist and kissed him on his bright curls; a long, earnest kiss, which fidgetted the boy, who was eager to be at further mischief, but which made Lady Lovel and Julia exchange an anxious enquiring glance. "You have not yet been wearied with children, my dear," said the former, cheerfully, "or you would not submit so placidly to Charlie's tyranny."

"Weary of children?" Miss Eustace's eyes glistened, "I should like them always about me; they never tire me."

"Have you ever been in the habit of frequenting nurseries and play-rooms?" asked Julia.

"Oh no; I rarely see them."

"I thought so: come and stay with us, and I will un-

dertake to satisfy the utmost of your fancies in that respect."

"I wish indeed we could persuade Miss Eustace to do so," said Lady Lovel, laying her hand on hers: it was one so much more gentle and kind than any she was used to, that Beatrice detained it there: while her eye glanced round on the cheerful group and sunny garden, and vainly longed to close with the invitation. Before she could reply, however, they were joined by Lady Seymour and Mrs. Hargrave: the former had seen Charles carrying water, and came eagerly to know who was ill. Nobody, only Miss Eustace had attempted an exertion for which she had no strength. "Yes, mamma!" cried George, "she was quite ill with doing what *I* can do without being the least bit tired!" Lady Seymour looked earnestly at her fair visitor, and as her mother had done before, shook her head: her concern was as great for her health, as Lady Lovel's had been for her state of mind. A glance of mutual understanding, exchanged between them and Julia, gave maturity to a scheme Lady Seymour had been cherishing from the day of her daughter's visit to the Hall: her report had more than confirmed many strange rumours that had reached them before, respecting the injudicious treatment this young lady met with at home: and nothing would satisfy her, but she must have her under her protection for a little while. A direct invitation, with Mrs. Hargrave standing by, seemed a hopeless sort of plan: assistance arrived, however, in the comely form of Mrs. Barnard, who seeing the carriage drive in, recollected she was just on the point of calling to enquire after dear Lady Lovel's cold, which had only been cured ten days: and accompanied by her two daughters, now joined

the party on the lawn. The Miss Bellamys were charmed with the opportunity of being introduced to Miss Eustace, and of taking an inventory of her dress, from the fringe of her flounces to the plume in her bonnet: and in their anxiety to pay her attention, their dear Miss Seymour was comparatively neglected. It was such an opportunity to begin a friendship, which might lead to invitations and presents, and the loan of a carriage, and an increase of fashion and consequence that was worth any exertion: they vied with each other in the servility of their homage, almost quarreling who should agree with her most implicitly; occasionally contradicting themselves with as little compunction as Polonius himself. This was a species of adulation quite new and rather puzzling to Miss Eustace, and very amusing to Lady Seymour, and while she was pleasing herself by drawing out both parties, Mrs. Barnard and Mrs. Hargrave fell into discourse.

They were older acquaintances than either would willingly have acknowledged: twenty-five years' separation in their paths had not effaced the remembrance of a time when they were pushing, side by side, through the jostle of life, both intent on their own narrow interests, and too eager in making progress, to be scrupulous about thrusting past another. The renewed acquaintance was less agreeable to Mrs. Hargrave than to the curate's lady: the latter had a tenacious memory, that recalled various little incidents in their early intercourse, which it by no means suited the position of the former to recollect: but being thrown together as they were, nothing could be more courteous than their mutual bearing, or more wary than the chess playing of their conversation.

"I must endeavour to have a few words with Miss Eustace, presently," said Mrs. Barnard, after a few polite

sentences had been exchanged, " I have a little message to give her, when she is at leisure."

" A message ? " repeated Mrs. Hargrave, lifting her brows, and giving her companion a side glance with her cold grey eyes ; " may I know what it is ? "

" Why, I know no reason why you should *not*," said the curate's lady, " except that I was requested to deliver it to her in private. Now," thought she to herself, " if she is very curious to know, she may make it worth my while to tell her."

" A secret ? " thought Mrs. Hargrave, " a mysterious message to Beatrice : I cannot allow that ; I must win her over. Shall I be very impertinent, my dear madam, if I hazard a guess respecting this mystery ? is it not about the living of Dylam ? "

" What ? why ? is the living vacant ? " cried Mrs Barnard, taken by surprise.

" Not vacant yet ; but old Mr. Sharpe has had another paralytic stroke, and I thought I had heard something about Mr. Barnard — but I beg your pardon ; I have taken a liberty in mentioning it. Do not let me keep you from Miss Eustace : only be good enough to bear in mind the extreme delicacy of her nerves : the least surprise is sometimes too much for them."

" My dear madam," said Mrs. Barnard, detaining her with the utmost respect, " I would not intrude myself on Miss Eustace for the world, nor take the responsibility of injuring her health : allow me to acquaint you with the whole business, simple as it is, and leave it to your judgment to decide."

Mrs. Hargrave bowed graciously, and moved aside a few steps, as if admiring a fine bed of scarlet geraniums.

" There is a poor woman," continued Mrs. Barnard, in

a low voice, "who received an injury in the fire the other night, and Miss Eustace, as perhaps you know, sent her relief. She is anxious to see her benefactress, and requested me (I have been constant in attention to her, poor soul, though it is but little I have in my power) to tell Miss Eustace nurse Adams wanted to see her."

"Hush!" said Mrs. Hargrave, eagerly. She looked round; no one was observing them: and the colour that had passed from her cheek, slowly returned. "Is it near, Mrs. Barnard?"

"Oh, close at hand, at the Rectory."

"Will you take me there, now?"

"With pleasure; but Miss Eustace?"

"Miss Eustace, my dear madam, must not hear the name mentioned, I beg. Nurse Adams, if this prove the same, attended a little cousin to whom she was much attached, in his last illness: she doubtless wishes to see her to obtain relief, which I can administer in her name, without exposing her nerves to the shock of seeing one, connected with so distressing a remembrance. Do me the favour of showing me the way, and rely on my sincere gratitude and regard."

"You are very good, my dear madam," said Mrs. Barnard, "and if the living of Dylam should be vacant, I feel confident in your good offices with his Lordship, on whom you have so much well-deserved influence."

"Can you doubt it an instant, Mrs. Barnard?"

Mrs. Hargrave stepped to Miss Eustace immediately, and reminding her that her father had promised to meet her here, observed she had just heard from Mrs. Barnard that a poor woman was anxious to see her, and therefore she must ask Lady Seymour to excuse her for a short time. Beatrice acquiesced without a word of enquiry:

Lady Seymour darted a keen, quick glance on both the ladies, and quietly complimented them on their benevolence to the poor. "We have been rather in the habit of connecting the idea of severity with your name, Mrs. Hargrave," she said, "thanks to the inflexibility of your cousin."

"I grieve to hear it: it is an erroneous notion, indeed: I appeal to Miss Eustace," replied the lady with a smile at Beatrice, whose dark eyes fell on her's for a moment, and then drooped in ominous silence.

"I am afraid," said Lady Seymour, sarcastically, "Mrs. Hargrave has chosen her witness ill."

"Oh no, no!" interrupted Beatrice, starting," no one knows better, no one has deeper cause, as Mrs. Hargrave knows:" and her eye again met her's with an imploring, terrified glance, to which no response was given. Mrs. Hargrave took Mrs. Barnard's arm, and withdrew in silence. And before the fair tacticians had been gone ten minutes, Lord Eustace arrived at the lodge, in one of his most urbane dispositions; apologizing to Julia for not having sent her the picture, which had not yet succeeded according to his design, but was to turn out something in time, if he could persuade the original to sit patiently. *Persuade*—Miss Eustace smiled at the expression, in a manner that Julia did not like to see; but his Lordship was too full of his own affairs to notice it. "You have read the papers of course, Lady Seymour?"

"I glanced over them this morning: I know to what I owe the honour of this visit. Ministers were in the minority, and parliament will soon be dissolved, and your Lordship is come canvassing for your friend, Mr. Lawrence."

"Most acute guesser!" said his Lordship, bowing

gaily, "and I may hope for your Ladyship's interest with Sir John?"

"Why, that is as you deal with me, my Lord: I am to be bought: every man has his price, and woman is not expected to be more incorruptible than her ruler."

"But so richly endowed as Lady Seymour appears to be," said Lord Eustace, with a complimentary bow all round, "what can I have to offer worthy her acceptance?"

"Your Lordship's speech savours of the courtier: we must exact a pledge from you: for aught I know, you may be intending to overthrow our glorious constitution: revive the Star Chamber, the Inquisition, the pillory, and the mendicant orders: these are not times in which to trust great men: you must give me a pledge of your good faith."

"Name it," said the peer, "and consider it yours: it is terrible to be thus arraigned before so many ladies."

"Leave your daughter, then, as a hostage, for the next fortnight, my Lord, and I promise you my vote and interest, flattering myself you will find them efficacious."

Lord Eustace appeared astonished, and darted a look at Beatrice, that drove the blood for an instant into her cheek, and thence to her heart, producing that faint sick sensation, to which nothing else can be compared, and whose frequent return was sapping the life-blood of her strength.

Lady Seymour instantly interposed. "Do not look at Miss Eustace, my lord; she has nothing in the world to do with it: she is not to be consulted at all; the bargain is all your own; your parental rights in return for my conjugal influence: Miss Eustace to remain here now;

no going back to the Hall to consider, and put it off, or send me a prettily worded excuse; but to submit herself entirely to my authority from this moment for a fortnight to come; then I can pledge myself your Lordship shall have Sir John's vote for Mr. Lawrence."

"Well, really, upon my word, Lady Seymour, you are a bold diplomatist. I am honoured, and so is my daughter, I am sure: what do you say, Beatrice?"

Julia felt the nervous pressure of Miss Eustace's fingers on her arm, and saved her the trouble of replying. "Indeed, my Lord, Miss Eustace owes me a visit, so I shall take it very ill if she does not consent."

"That claim cannot be disputed," admitted his Lordship: "then really I have no choice but to strike the bargain. But will it not be better for Beatrice to return home first, to make her arrangements, and be with you in time for dinner?"

"No, no," said Lady Seymour, shaking her head, "possession is nine points of the law, and ten in a diplomatic treaty: Miss Eustace's maid will understand, much better than she possibly can, all that a young lady requires on a visit; and you can send her back with the sac de nuit in your carriage, after it has set Mrs. Hargrave down."

"Well, really," said Lord Eustace, "you seem to have settled it all so quietly, I have no more to say. It *is* a bargain, Lady Seymour: and there is my hand upon it."

"Come forward then, Miss Eustace," said Lady Seymour, "and deliver yourself over by your own will and deed."

Her father's approving nod re-assuring Beatrice, she came forward with a blushing smile, that induced Lord Eustace to take her hand with more kindness than usual,

and put it in Lady Seymour's. "I thus resign all my rights in you for the next fortnight: but what I shall do without you, I cannot tell, my dear." Miss Eustace raised her eyes to his in amazement, and the unexpected kindness of those few words, and of the smile on his face, overthrew her nerves completely. She burst into tears.

And yet, reader, though this is the second time of which it is recorded of her, Beatrice was not naturally a weeping heroine: she had no taste for scenes, or displays of any sort or kind: it was nervous feeling alone, such as the joyous and strong-minded can neither believe nor sympathize in. Lady Seymour herself did not pity it half so much as Lady Lovel did, attributing it partly to weakness of character; but she felt compassion enough to immediately send her away from the lawn, with her devoted Julia, to compose herself in the shrubbery, or lie down on the sofa as she thought best: then turning to Lord Eustace, who looked embarrassed and annoyed, expressed her firm hope, that a little change and cheerfulness would soon restore the tone of his daughter's nerves. "You must leave her entirely to me, my Lord: come and see her as often as you please, but only as a visitor; and do not write or tell her anything to excite or disturb her mind. I see what she wants, and she shall have it."

Lord Eustace thanked her gratefully, and then took his leave in the carriage, to find Mrs. Hargrave, and acquaint her, as best he might, of the arrangement made without consulting her. Mrs. Hargrave was not pleased: but she saw there was no remedy: Lord Eustace could be peremptory sometimes, even with her, and on the subject of the election he was too earnest to be opposed; so she ju-

diciously gave him her hearty approbation: the more willingly that by a master-stroke of policy, she had prevented Beatrice from seeing her nurse Adams.

Mrs. Barnard soon came back, and finding how matters stood, dropped a variety of small hints that were not taken; and was compelled at last to depart without the remotest invitation to luncheon, dinner, or tea: no small trial to a lady of her sociable temperament.

Lady Seymour, pleased beyond measure with her own successful manœuvre, hastened to exult over her prisoner. "Well, my dear, do you feel quite safe in my hands? Are you prepared to undergo a very severe course of discipline?" Beatrice shook her head with a smile. "You little know," continued Lady Seymour, looking steadily at her, "what you may be exposed to. If I do undertake the reformation of a character, I do it thoroughly, without considering means. I shall prescribe for you at once—early hours."

"In the morning, granted," said Beatrice.

"Morning? yes, and evening too; no sitting up to study, or write sonnets to the moon, while you are here, believe me: study of all kinds forbidden, unless of the plain, honest, matter-of-fact school, such as The Penny Magazine and Chambers's Journal; none of your high-flown philosophical works, making wrong appear right, and vice versâ: no sitting for hours over an extract volume, or an embroidery frame; you have had too much of that already. Exercise, gardening, plenty of fresh air, those are the medicines you shall take. Oh, we shall make you strong and well before the week is out, depend upon it. I undertake the care of your health, Julia, of your entertainment, and Lady Lovel is responsible for

your mind; so now you are clear from all anxiety about yourself, and need only do as you are bid."

All this was too kindly said to alarm, and Beatrice, though not quite sure what was going to be done to her, felt no wise inclined to rebel: had she known her hostess better, perhaps she might have been somewhat dismayed, for Lady Seymour's delight at having a new, docile pupil, with a variety of bad habits to correct, made her revolve in her mind a whole code of wholesome regulations, to be enforced in substantial earnest. Before any more found vent, however, Julia, who saw them coming, carried off her friend, to show her what the children were clamorous she should see and admire; their own gardens, laid out and kept entirely by themselves. The afternoon passed pleasantly away, under the shade of the trees: the children romped and played: Lady Lovel knitted: Julia and Harry, keeping as near their guest as they could, admired her to their hearts' content: while stony-hearted little Charles, blind to her beauty and her devotion, could only be induced by large bribes to leave his cart and his top, when quite out of breath, and sit for two minutes and a half on her knee to be kissed. The garden was as little to be compared to that at the Hall, as Julia's person to that of her friend, but there was a charm about the social intercourse, the unrestrained converse, the joyous voices of the children, and the perfect rest from bitter words and dark looks, that made it lovelier to the weary spirit of Beatrice Eustace, than Rasselas's valley at the moment of admittance. It was impossible to feel among strangers: every heart seemed devoted to her service, and she was assured over and over again that the old friendships of the two families gave them as much right to her presence and

society as if they had been in the daily habit of meeting. So agreeably sped the time, that when Lady Seymour, whose heart misgave her, that her guest might be of unpunctual habits, came to warn her the dressing bell would soon ring, she could not but nod her head with satisfaction at the cheerful expression of her countenance. "Your maid is come, my dear; if I may venture so to call the most fashionable lady I have seen for a long time: with boxes innumerable: and here is your page very anxious to speak to you. The coachman and footman I suppose, will follow presently."

Paul came forward at these words, hat in hand, and looking very much as if he was going to disgrace his livery by crying. "If you please, ma'am, I may come too, mayn't I?"

"You, Paul?" said Miss Eustace, half raising herself from the soft couch of moss where she was reclining, "I cannot have you here, Lady Seymour has not room for so many."

"But please ma'am, I can sleep anywhere, and I'll do anything. I don't care what I do, and you always said you'd never go nowhere without taking me, and I hope, ma'am, you'll let me come. Please, my lady, let me come," and he looked at Lady Seymour with so piteous a face, his brown eyes brimful of tears, and his wide mouth twitching nervously in his efforts to keep from a cry, that she must have been hard of heart indeed to refuse: Julia, too, pleaded eagerly, and was so well seconded by the children that it was soon settled, to Beatrice's confusion, and the delight of George and Eleanor, who at once asserted their claim on his gratitude, by making him swing them successively, till he was called to assist in waiting at table.

Sir John came in late from a ride, and was met by his lady at the door of his dressing-room. "My dear, you have not promised your vote, have you?"

"Vote! no, why should I?"

"For no reason whatever, my dear: and you must bear in mind not to promise it, for I have disposed of it already."

"You *have?*"

"Yes, to Lord Eustace, for Mr. Lawrence. Make haste, my dear John, or you will keep dinner waiting."

"But stop, stop," shouted Sir John, as Lady Seymour was going down stairs, "what, what's all this? I don't like Mr. Lawrence; never did; an unsociable puppy with no idea of sport; can't ride; and shuts the hunt out of his park."

"He is of your own principles in politics," said Lady Seymour.

"Politics? perhaps he may be; but I have no fancy of returning a member with such churlish notions; and besides, who do you think is going to stand, and has got all the Chartists on his side? Richard Durant; as gentlemanly a fellow as breathes, and rides to hounds better than I do myself. I wanted to give him my vote."

"To the Chartist member? you are joking. Vote him into the hunt club by all means, and risk his neck as often as you please; but do not put him into parliament, to jeopardize ours. Indeed, you cannot: you always said you would vote for Mr. Lawrence, and Lord Eustace has paid handsomely for the promise." Sir John looked incredulous. "Here comes the bribe," she continued, as Beatrice, fresh from the skilful hands of Mrs. Newman, came out of her room, "and if you retract my pledge, I must at once send her back to Eustace Hall."

This was unanswerable, Sir John could only bow his welcome, and rush into his dressing-room; and by the time he had got off his coat, he had nearly persuaded himself he had always meant to vote for Lawrence after all.

Lady Seymour was somewhat ruffled by the smallness of her patient's appetite: her entreaties and her serious advice were alike powerless to bring Miss Eustace successfully through half the work laid out for her; and she was fain to content herself by a private order that a good basin of arrow-root should be ready, to take into the young lady's bedroom when she retired for the night. She was not satisfied, either, with the style of her music, though Lady Lovel listened with the tears rolling down her cheeks, and Julia sat rapt in poetic dreams: it was beautiful, certainly, but too sad; too full of that morbid melancholy that would be her death if not rooted out; and she fidgetted about the room till Beatrice stopped.

"There," she said, closing the piano, "you play very well, my dear, too well: you feel it too much: your hand is burning; sit quietly down by the window, and you shall have some tea."

Beatrice, with her usual docility, obeyed the command, but as she approached the window, started back: the shadow of a man had fallen on the sill in the moonlight. Julia was the first to see the start and the cause, and sprang to the window in hopes of a Chartist at least. "Who is there?"

"Friend to this ground, and liegeman to the Dane;" said Lionel Revis, presenting himself before the window.

"Mr. Revis!" exclaimed several voices at once; "prowling about the house like a lurking enemy!" "Come in," said Lady Seymour, "now you are there: you have nearly

frightened Miss Eustace into a fainting fit, and you must make your own apology." Lionel's hat was instantly in his hand, and an expression of deep interest and admiration shone on his face, as he turned to the young lady of whom he had heard so much, but for whose beauty he was in no ways prepared. "My apology must be, that I heard such exquisite music as I approached the window, I could not bear to stop it by appearing: I hope the alarm has passed away."

"It will, presently; come in," said Lady Seymour, "you have apologised very well: sit down, and tell us what it is you want, for we never see you unless you *do* want something."

"Very true," said Lionel, giving his hat to George, "to-night I want to look at two or three books in the library."

"Cæsar, for one," suggested Sir John, rising to give him his accustomed greeting, and as usual, forgetting the right was the injured member, and shaking it much harder than the Rector liked; "bless me, I forgot your burn: how is it now? can you hold a pen?"

"I was able to do so to-day for the first time," said Lionel, "and never appreciated the faculty so much before. So it is, you see, with all our good things: there is nothing like losing them to show their value."

"Just what I thought on Sunday," said Lady Seymour, "when Mr. Barnard preached instead of yourself: really, Mr. Revis, you must read him a lecture on the composition of his discourses: such a string of commonplace, wherever it was new, and of hackneyed passages where it was old, I never had the fortune to listen to. I saw by your own face you were on thorns all the time."

"It is impossible for me to be otherwise," said Lionel, "when my congregation assemble to criticise, more than to learn. May I ask permission to step into the library?" Lady Seymour rose and lighted a taper. "I knew I should affront you, but it would come out. Come, and avenge yourself on fathers and seraphic doctors. I conclude the commentary has taken a fresh start. When will it be finished?" Lionel shook his head. "You are overworking," said Lady Seymour, "and it is very wrong: Mr. Barnard takes his case, while you are running all over the parish at every one's beck and call. By the way, do you admire that young lady in the drawing-room?"

"It would be strange if I did not: I was nearly as much taken by surprise as she was by my shadow on the window sill."

"You want the old books, I suppose: they are on the upper row: there is the step ladder: it is a comfort to see the dust brushed off the leaves. I hear you have not succeeded very well with Lord Eustace."

"I have not done with him yet," said Lionel, running his finger over the backs of the books, in search of a volume that was not in its right place.

"You will gain little by further exertion: he is an unprofitable subject: we have known him a long time, and so many unsatisfactory stories have been told about his unkindness to his daughter, I have taken the first opportunity of inviting her away from her uncomfortable home."

Lionel turned on the step ladder, and looked down with much interest, "Are the reports true, Lady Seymour?"

"Who can tell? I only see that she is drooping, and

melancholy, and nervous: it may be constitutional, and it may be from the system of *gronderie:* I have seen her grow pale if he looked at her, and tremble if Mrs. Hargrave frowned, and that is no good sign in an only child."

"No, indeed," said Lionel, "but what remedy do you propose?"

"Time will show: I have her now under my own eye, which for her aunt's sake, who was one of my earliest friends, I am very glad of: and we are all under a covenant to do her good as far as we can, and take her part against all comers. I think we must enlist you in the cause, if you have a heart to spare from those interminable folios."

Lionel made no answer, but having now laid his hand on the volume he wanted, sprang down the ladder, and began making notes as fast as pencil would go. Lady Seymour watched him with secret irritation; it was all very well and very correct to be so studious, but in so young a man it would be more natural, if he would think a little of sublunary things besides. She would have been the first to call him idle and trifling if he had behaved differently: but still she was provoked: and Lionel saw it, but he wrote on, and never minded; when he was satisfied, he put his notes into his pocket, and looked up with his arch smile. "Now, I am at your ladyship's service, as a knight errant, or whatever you please—if you think *you can trust me.*"

He was not so indifferent as she had supposed: no eye was more keenly susceptible of beauty; and the chivalry of his nature throbbed in every pulse at the idea of oppression or unkindness: but it was his habit to do one thing at a time, and he could not attend to Miss Eustace till he had done with St. Augustine and Hooker. On

his return to the drawing-room, now lighted and made cheerful by the urn and tea equipage; her graceful, languid figure reclining in a low arm chair by Lady Lovel's side, fixed his eye at once; he watched her silently through the tea drinking process, listened to her voice, noticed her changing colour, the transparency of her hands, the shadow in her brow; and his heart grew warm with sympathy. He stooped to take Lady Seymour's cup, and whispered "Enlist me."

"In earnest?" she said, looking up sharply.

"In hearty earnest: I see on that face a hand-writing I know too well; we must all try to blot it out."

"Then you must stay now, and help us."

"I intend to do so."

He was as good as his word: the two hours writing to which he had devoted the evening, were deferred till after his return home; and he drew his chair sociably in among the party, and looked resolved to be happy and comfortable. They had never seen him so lively; he seemed to have left his burden of parochial cares in the library, with Hooker and St. Augustine, and to be as ready for anything in the way of diversion as George or Eleanor, who had been allowed to sit up an hour later than usual, and thought it wasted if nothing particular went on. George was making a windmill, that possessed every desirable quality but that of turning its sails: it had cost him many a sigh, and won him many a sarcasm; but his hopes of its ultimate perfection were as stedfast as those of Lord Eustace in his rivalship of Vandyke. The windmill was brought to Mr. Revis for his advice, and very earnest was the scrutiny he bestowed on its structure: George, who was just deep in the first perusal (happy boy!) of

Miss Edgeworth's Harry and Lucy, and with a burning ambition to be just such a clever fellow as Harry, expected all his elders to be as prompt and ingenious in answering questions and solving difficulties as the invaluable father and mother of that fortunate hero: stood anxiously waiting to know if there was not some deeply rooted impediment, only to be solved by a reference to Joyce's Scientific Dialogues. Lionel asked for a knife, and string, and glue, and a newspaper to lay on the table that it might not be scratched: and in five minutes remedied the grand defect. "There, my boy, now you are ready for Don Quixote himself. But why are you content with such Lilliputian workmanship as this? Why do you not build something out of doors; where is the summer-house you talked so much of a little while ago?"

George jumped half his height with ecstasy. "It was always put off for something or other; do let us set about it! I know exactly where it should be, just where grandmamma likes to sit and look at the view."

Eleanor eagerly seconded the notion, and it was laid before the elders. Harry scoffed at the idea of their being able to make anything worth looking at: Julia thought it would be troublesome; Lady Seymour, that they would cut their fingers and tear their clothes; but Lionel having proposed, would by no means relinquish the scheme. He supported all the children's arguments, and overthrew all those opposed to them, gained Julia, laughed Harry down, and undertook to cure all bruises and darn all rents: and what was more, to send in the next morning a supply of boards and poles, that had been collected to make a shed in his own yard. "There is an old Irishman of my acquaintance, to whom I am glad to give a job, that he

may feel a right to his dinner; and he shall bring them and carry them to the proper place. So now that is settled, we must have a design; these ladies will help us, I am sure.

Pencils and paper were produced; and everybody, Miss Eustace included, tried their skill in sketching bowers, and when the designs were compared together, it was unanimously agreed that Lady Seymour's was too ugly; Julia's too magnificent; Mr. Revis's too difficult; the children's too misshapen, and Beatrice's exactly right. This made Beatrice of course, a warm friend to the enterprise, and she came forward now with two or three modest suggestions, that promised well for its success: offering moreover the services of Paul, who was an experienced knocker of nails, and liked nothing better. So all was settled, and George so pleased that he hugged his dear Mr. Revis round the neck, and was then on the point of rushing away to avoid the laugh excited by his gratitude. Lionel, however, arrested his flight with a promise of telling him something pleasant, and with both the children sitting close to his knees, began describing a spot a few miles off, which he had discovered lately; such a spot for a gipsying! where there were crags and hollows for hide and seek, and a clear stream to fill the kettle, and mossy turf to sit upon, and everything as wild and romantic as heart could desire. Julia's eyes sparkled at the sound, and as he had anticipated, it became at once an eager topic of discussion whether they should not all go before the summer weather broke up; and while Miss Eustace was with them. No party, no gathering of neighbours; only themselves and the children, and the Lloyds, if they liked it, and Jane Barnard. The more they talked it over

the pleasanter it sounded, and as for difficulties, there seemed none worth mentioning; Lady Seymour was most gracious on the subject of cold fowl and hard eggs; and Harry, as soon as he found Miss Eustace favour the scheme, loudly declared it was the best he had heard in his life, and must be carried out forthwith. Forthwith was too speedy, however, for their arrangements; Lionel himself was engaged for the next two or three days, and when he suggested their not waiting for him, they all declared they would rather give it up altogether. So a day was fixed, too distant to satisfy George, but for the intervening happiness of building the summer-house; and he danced round Beatrice's chair, exclaiming, "I wish you would often come to stay here, with all these delightful schemes!" But here Lady Seymour, alarmed lest her guest should suspect she was being treated like a child, who is ordered to be amused, cut short his raptures by sending him off to bed. The rest of the party sat till ten o'clock, in cheerful conversation, which gradually, between Lady Lovel and the Rector, took a more serious turn; though cheerful still. They talked as those who feel, not merely as those who read: Lionel related instances within his own knowledge, of the wonder-working power of a renewed will, in conquering difficulties, reconciling enemies, banishing strife from the domestic hearth: he had seen it done, seen a worn and weary spirit to whom death had been the only thought of comfort, gradually revive, strengthen, rise into new life by the influence of prayer and resolution; and grow to be as distinguished for usefulness and peace, as before for despondency and sorrow. They entered upon no disputed points; said not a word about the last new controversy between A. and B. whe-

ther black was better than white, or wood than stone, or round than square; they confined themselves, if the word may be used on a boundless subject, to the comfort, the blessedness of a life given to God; and if ever two countenances bore testimony to its truth, it was written on the old lady's placid brow, and the clear, glistening earnestness of Lionel's beaming eye. And Julia listened with a beating heart that felt every word; and Lady Seymour with a host of sturdy prejudices, gradually relaxing their hold: and Sir John with a twinge of conscience, that made him more attentive than usual during the family prayers; and Beatrice Eustace listened, and of her feelings she must speak for herself. Long after the house was hushed and Julia asleep in the next room, and Lady Seymour having looked in to hurry her guest, had gone to bed under the happy delusion that her candles had been out this half hour, Beatrice was seated at her dressing-table, writing in her private diary, from which we must transcribe a few passages.

"This day is a new era in my being: I have been at rest; I have enjoyed existence; I have drawn the breath of liberty: I am under a roof of kindly friendship; I have been blessed by an angel's voice: I have heard words of hope and consolation such as never were spoken to me before.

"Oh! that I could but take them to myself! oh! that I could enter into their meaning! that I might but believe they are sent to *me*; that I too might find rest for my burdened and weary soul! A renewed will, a power divine, a life begun afresh under the wing of a Redeemer; usefulness, content, affection, confidence—what an Eden he opened before me...what a gulf I know to lie between!

"I still hear his voice as he opened the Scriptures, and taught us like children, the simple truths of boundless wisdom. Why did he choose that awful subject, 'The City of Refuge?' why did he paint in those few, thrilling words that agony for which there is no name, the guiltless remorse, the undeserved despair, the haunting spectre, the embittered life: what can he know of such suffering? I could tell him more than this!

"The City of Refuge! Blessed institution of peace and shelter for the heavy laden with the curse of Providence; the innocent cause of another's untimely grave! Would that Christianity owned such a blessing: that there were quiet dwelling-places under the protection of holy teachers, where the disgraced head might bow to its lot, without encountering the shudder or the wrath of man!

"Is there indeed a refuge for me? where I might sit down in peace and safety, and none make me afraid; where I could look back on the mournful past without anguish, and on the awful future without this sinking dread? Oh that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come before His seat! that I might hear His own blessed voice assuring me; 'Neither do I condemn thee!' But it is prayer alone that can reach His compassion: and how can I dare to pray, till all has been confessed?

"Confessed? and what is there to confess? an accident, an oversight, a mistake, committed in a moment of anxiety and exhaustion—deplored even with tears of blood! What tribunal in heaven or earth would judge harshly of such a deed, or withhold pity for the long duration of the punishment? Had I but the courage—but I have none: and the heavy secret must remain upon my heart, till its burden crushes out my life.

"O Edward! my child, my brother, my infant friend! my pride, my darling once, my terror and affliction now—living I was all in all to you: in death can you judge me so ill? Knew you not that to rescue your life, I would have laid down mine, though it was then brighter and more precious than it has ever been again? Would a hundred times that I had died, before that bitter hour, when your bright curls lay damp upon my shoulder, and your eyes sought mine for relief in vain:—and all that gave beauty and strength to existence, passed away from my spirit...and yet I could not die.

"O that I had wings like a dove! that I might flee away, and be at rest! At *rest?* and whither? Not to the Heaven of peace—that is for those who call God their Father: not to the sleep of the grave—that is but for them who shall wake in joy: not to the bosom of the Redeemer—His face is turned away from me. And yet it is for these I yearn; for the hope of these I would labour, suffer, beg my bread, endure penances; go afoot to a distant shrine, give up my body to the burning! And oh! that life of faith, and devotion he describes, whose influence beams on his brow, and whose music thrills in his voice, is it indeed what I might have lived—what I might be living now?"...

Miss Eustace laid down her pen: it was time she did, for her hand was trembling and her forehead bathed in dew. She rose from the table, and drew the window curtain back, and looked out into the quiet night. Silent, and still, and beautiful was the face of nature at rest; there was no sound in heaven or earth, no cloud near the silver moon, no motion in the long dark shadows: not a

murmur came up from the village: in the house all slept but herself: she might have been as solitary in the creation as she felt in heart.

And in that calm, cloudless firmament, was there the shadow of a Judge's frown? was there a whisper of condemnation in the musical silence of night? Was there not indeed, as Lionel Revis had assured her, a City of Refuge, even for sorrow like hers, whose builder and maker was the God, for a smile from whom she would have smiled even upon death? Her weary heart yearned to be comforted, yet dared not believe: and too depressed to endure solitude any longer, she left the window, and looked into Julia's room. Julia, fast wrapped in the sleep of careless and active health, was quite unconscious of the poetical vision bending at the foot of her bed, with pale brow and floating hair, and a light shaded by her hand. She slept on unconcernedly: and Beatrice had not the heart to wake her. The sight of her quiet happy face did her good, and with an involuntary murmur of "Dear little thing!" she was turning away, when her eye was caught by a small well-used volume, which Julia had been reading as she undressed, and which she had been too careless to close and put by. The page lay open at the following passage: familiar to many a humble reader, but new to the studious heiress of Eustace Hall.

Does the Gospel word proclaim
  Rest for those that weary be?
Then, my soul, put in thy claim—
  Sure that promise speaks to thee:
Marks of grace I cannot show,
  All polluted is my best;
But I weary am, I know,
  And the weary long for rest.

Burdened with a load of sin,
  Harassed with tormenting doubt,
Hourly conflicts from within,
  Hourly crosses from without;
All my little strength is gone,
  Sink I must without supply;
Sure upon the earth is none
  Can more weary be than I.

In the ark the weary dove
  Found a welcome resting place,
Thus my spirit longs to prove
  Rest in Christ the Ark of grace:
Tempest tossed I long have been,
  And the flood increases fast;
Open, Lord, and take me in,
  Till the storm be overpast!

The ideas were far from striking, and the poetry in many instances rugged: but the description so vividly pourtrayed her own state, that tears, large, but less bitter than before, broke from the eyes of Beatrice as she read. She took the volume into her room; tore out the last written page of her Diary, and transcribed the hymn in its stead: then went to bed, and sobbed herself to sleep like a child.



CHAPTER VI.

IT was all very well for the Rector to lay plans, and throw young architects into fevers of ambitious enterprise for the next week, and then go quietly home, and leave their parents and friends to enjoy the consequences. The establishment of the Lodge did anything but bless Mr. Revis the next morning when Master George, and Master Charles, and Miss Eleanor, wild to begin the summer-house, rose at six o'clock, rushed to the tool-house for implements, hunted up first Paul the page, and then Ralph the gardener, and would listen neither to reason nor entreaty, till some decided steps had been taken about the erection. Then at every interval there was an attack on the patience of the elders; they would hardly give them time for their breakfast; and the moment it was swallowed, out they must all come, whether agreeable or not, to reconnoitre the proposed site, and settle what was to be done first. Charles, who had not been slow in discovering his power, made Miss Eustace follow him about like a slave, and the unanswerable argument "it will so please Mr. Revis," kept Julia from any of those elder-sisterly remonstrances, she might have considered it her

duty to give. Then, before they had decided what was to be done, arrived old Larry, the Irish beggar, with his Riverence's compliments, and just this little faggot, meaning a respectable load of boards, as a present to the young ladies, long life to them! Larry was handsomely rewarded, and sent back with a private message from George, that they could not get on at all without him, and he *must* come directly. He gave this message as he had done the other, after his own version. "Och, but it's your Riverence is the lucky man! there are the young ladies, the darlints, bothered entirely with the logs and boords, so they are; and not a *fut* can they stir without your honour to the fore: and it's put on the hat your Riverence must, and off directly."

"Go back to the young ladies," said Lionel, "and tell them with my compliments, that at three o'clock if possible, I will be with them for half an hour: but that till then, I must go on with my work, and I advise them not to neglect theirs."

"Solid advice!" said Julia, when Larry was gone: the last message so amused him, that he gave it literally: "solid advice; and it is my morning at the school, which I was very nearly forgetting. Adieu all my bright visions of literature and music to-day! I must away to A. B. C. and Crossman's Catechism: I wish you were obliged to go with me."

"If I was, I might not wish to do so, but as I am not, will you take me there?" asked Beatrice. Julia was delighted: Lady Seymour, who thought she could already trace the good effects of early hours on her guest's countenance, gave the plan full approval, provided she was not allowed to tire herself: and Lady Lovel took an oppor-

tunity of moving across the room to make a kind remark on the pleasures of usefulness. Harry must needs walk with them, in spite of George's entreaties that he would stay and saw wood; and remained outside while they entered the school-house, desperately in love, and maddened with the very idea of being obliged to go back to Harrow.

Great was Jane Barnard's surprise on the entrance of Miss Eustace, great was the commotion in the whole assembly: the teachers rose and curtsied; the children stared: Miss Lloyd came forward with warm expressions of pleasure: Mrs. Barnard, happening to pass, and hearing who was there, hurried home to give her daughters a hint, and Miss Hetty was not long in appearing too. The business of the school seemed likely to suffer by all this; but Jane was too single-minded to be easily put out of her path, and Julia had Mr. Revis's message still in her ears, so after Miss Eustace had spoken civilly to the mistress, and admired the size of the room, and looked round on the children, with a heart yearning to do them a kindness, the classes were called up as usual, and the din of repeating lessons resumed in full force. Beatrice volunteered to superintend the writing class, and drawing off her delicate kid gloves, sat down to set them copies, just as Miss Hetty Bellamy came in. Dear me! how surprised she was to see Miss Eustace there, and so employed; so kind and so condescending! she envied the children with such a teacher, and sincerely hoped, (with marked emphasis) that they would show their sense of the great honour done them, by behaving as they should. "Depend upon it, Miss Bellamy," whispered Miss Eustace, "a teacher is a teacher to them, neither more nor

less, and their sense of the honour you are pleased to speak of will be swallowed up in their dislike to writing the copy. You are more experienced in these matters than I am: will you tell me if this will do?"

"Admirable! beautifully written! nothing can be better," said Miss Hetty, who knew as little about it as might be. Jane was passing at the moment, and stopped abruptly short. "Too pointed, and the words too difficult, Miss Eustace."

"Thank you, Miss Barnard, I will try again," said Beatrice, looking up with so sweet a smile, Jane could not help feeling how beautiful she was. Several times, in the course of the morning, she looked across to see how she was going on, and every time perceived her bending over some unfortunate scribe, endeavouring to guide the thick stiff fingers along the path of elegant caligraphy, in which she was herself so distinguished; but with a brow so knit, and a face so pale, it was evident the noise and the exertion were far more than she was accustomed to. "There is good in her, for all her finery," thought Jane, but who would not be, with Julia for an example?" Julia, meanwhile, was full of business; she had a large unruly class to deal with, and a way of doing it peculiar to herself; and, between jest and earnest, managed to keep order pretty well. One case, however, came before her this morning, to decide which she was quite incompetent, and the counsel of the other teachers was called in. Little Susan Ellis had been found out in an act of wilful disobedience, made worse by falsehood, and Martha Cawthrop was her accuser; and, upon cross-examination, it appeared that Martha Cawthrop had known the offence a long while, had encouraged Susan to deny

it, and had then worked upon her fears, by threatening to tell; so that Susan had been glad to buy a respite with cakes and bulls-eyes, and every valuable she possessed, till a quarrel arising between them, Martha had at last fulfilled her cowardly threat. Susan, a timid, delicate child, seemed bowed down with shame: all her class were whispering about her, and all the school watching her: and when Jane Barnard asked her a question, she burst into tears. Fear alone had made her tell a story, and she had often wished it was all known, for Martha was so unkind. It was a hard case to deal with, as the faults were glaring, and justice seemed to demand a penalty. The culprit had given up all hope of escape, when Miss Eustace unexpectedly took up her cause, and entreated for pardon so eloquently, there was no maintaining a refusal. Susan was permitted to take her place among the others, and encouraged to redeem her name by future good behaviour; but, when the attention of the school was drawn away to other subjects, she was taken gently by the hand, and led into a corner by Miss Eustace. Her soft voice and tenderness of manner reassured the frightened child, and she found courage by degrees to tell all her tale of woe: her troubles with Martha, her fears of detection, and her frequent longing to confess; and as she looked in the beautiful face bent over her, she was surprised to see it nearly as sorrowful as her own.

"Let this be a warning to you, my dear child," said Beatrice, bending still lower, that her voice might reach no one else, "never to keep back a fault. Try and be brave; any punishment is better than the misery of a secret, and of being at the mercy of any one who finds it out. You see you might have confessed before, and been happy by

this time. Pray for a brave, honest heart, and you may save yourself a life of unhappiness." Martha Cawthrop, who thought if Susan was forgiven, and petted by the grand lady, she ought at least to be taken notice of--seized the first opportunity of crossing her way—but to her great surprise, Miss Eustace recoiled from her with aversion, declaring she would have nothing to do with a girl who could play the tyrant over another. All the school heard this, and remembered it, and Martha got no peace that day, or for a long time after.

The school was on the point of breaking up, when two girls, an elder and a little one, came in, and were, of course, received with a severe reprimand. The little one began to cry; her sister seemed struggling not to do the same, but walked up to the mistress with no signs of fear. "I couldn't help it, ma'am." The mistress was about to reprove her. "No, ma'am, please, mother knows I couldn't help it: may be I shall never be able to come again. We're all—" *ruined*, she was going to say, but a convulsive sob choked the word. In a little while she was able to explain that there was great distress at home, and Mr. Hargrave had said they must leave their cottage directly, because it was to be pulled down by my Lord's orders. Father was like one mad, and was gone off to some friends of his across the moor, and mother was nearly as bad, and they were all miserable. The teachers exchanged glances of strong sympathy: every one felt Miss Eustace was the person to appeal to, and were surprised she did not come forward at once. They closed the business of the school rather sooner than usual, and Mary Simpson having been consoled with a little money, and the promise of further assistance, was sent home,

while they held consultation. Harry joined them as soon as they came out, and brought word that Lord Eustace had passed a little while ago, and was coming back directly. "The luckiest thing in the world," said Miss Lloyd, "now Miss Eustace will speak to his Lordship, I know, and get these poor souls out of their trouble. Dear, what a blessing to be sure, to have caught Miss Eustace just at this moment: of all men, I should be sorry Jem Simpson should be turned out, because he has friends who are always trying to make a Chartist of him, and this would throw him into their hands at once. You will speak, Miss Eustace, won't you?"

Jane Barnard watched her steadily. "You will not mind in such a case as this," whispered Julia, with some anxiety. Beatrice shook her head, and expressed a fear she might make matters worse by interfering; but they would not believe this, and plied her with entreaties, as if she had required any to move her compassion: and how was she to make them comprehend the peculiar susceptibility of her father on any matter connected with his tenants? how explain to them the humiliating fact, that her favour would be the surest road to their dismissal? She could only listen in silence, leaving them to conclude, if they pleased, it was from want of feeling; and in the midst of the discussion Lord Eustace rode up. He gave his horse to his groom, and joined the party. As soon as the proper civilities had passed the rest drew aside, leaving him at liberty to speak to his daughter; and the tone of his voice altered immediately. "Here are letters for you; I was not aware you kept up a correspondence with those people," pointing contemptuously to the handwriting, "let it cease at once, if you please. I wish you to be more careful in your

letters to your aunts: they complain of your want of liveliness, and ask if you are ill: as you are not ill, do not write as if you were. Attend to that, if you please: write to-day a long, cheerful, amusing letter. Mrs. Hargrave tells me what I am very sorry to hear; your behaviour to her is scarcely bearable at times: I really do not know what to do: I have spoken to you till I am tired; you really must conquer that terrible temper of yours, Beatrice."

"I thought it was conquered," said Beatrice, with that melancholy smile he could never bear to see.

"There, that is always the way! the moment I tell you of a fault, you put on the look of an injured martyr: it really is more than I can bear sometimes. I cannot stand it to-day, I tell you, worried on all sides as I am."

Miss Eustace timidly laid her hand on his arm. "I did not wish, I never do wish to vex you; oh! if you would only believe it!"

"Well, well," he said, relaxing a little, "then do as I wish; only do not let me have a scene, for that is unsufferable. Is there anything you want before I go?"

Beatrice turned pale, and kept a nervous hold of his impatient arm. "Yes—I was going—only I am afraid —it is only—"

"Speak out, my dear!" he said, hastily; and with desperate courage, she spoke out, and earnestly entreated a little mercy for Simpson. His brow grew darker than before: he was surprised at her doing what she knew he strictly forbade, interfering about the people: he had his reasons: Simpson had attended a Chartist meeting, and could not pay his rent, and no Chartist should have any mercy from him. "So be silent at once, Beatrice: I am

very much displeased at your presuming to mention the subject. You knew I should be, so I suppose that was your reason for doing it."

Miss Eustace let go his arm, and shrunk back to her expectant companions, with such a hopeless look of dejection as cut Julia to the heart. His Lordship rode off, with a hasty bow, and then Beatrice had the mortification of confessing her ill success. Miss Lloyd was quite provoked. "Bless me, my dear, you did not half ask him: you should not have let him stir without a promise. I wish I had known what was going on: I would have made a push for poor Simpson, that I would, and to tell you the truth, I have half a mind to follow my Lord, and try what I can do."

"Pray do not," said poor Beatrice, "my father is peculiarly sensitive on such points, and I am afraid—"

"There, don't be afraid of me, my dear young lady; I sha'nt interfere if you don't like it: only I must say, and I should say it before his face, it is a hard-hearted cruel thing, and I only hope he may not have reason to repent it. And I cannot help thinking, my dear Miss Eustace — you'll excuse an old woman's freedom of tongue—that if you had felt about it half as much as you ought, you would have spoken more heartily, and had better luck." The good lady had never looked so thoroughly out of patience in her life: she would not walk a step farther with them, nor offer them a crumb of cake, nor a drop of sage tea: but wished them all a very good morning, and whisked off to see what she could send for Simpson's children.

Miss Eustace submitted patiently to the charge: it was hard to bear, but harder to disprove; and blame and mis-

construction were too familiar companions to be resented or withstood. An awkward silence ensued, for if she did not contradict it, who could? and busy as they were with their own thoughts, they started to find themselves at the door of Simpson's cottage. "I did not mean to come here now," said Julia, "what is to be done?"

Mary saw them from the window, and shouted in glee, "Mother, all will be right now! here come Lady Eustace, Miss Seymour and Miss Barnard! I told you they would come!"

They were obliged to go in, and the moment Mrs. Simpson saw Miss Eustace, she accosted her in the most urgent terms, pleading her large family, her husband's industrious habits, their character, their long residence, everything she could think of likely to touch the gentle heart that grew sick with misery in listening to her. Beatrice's mild assurances of her own inability were not heeded for an instant: the woman grew more and more urgent; appealed to the other ladies for testimony and for countenance, firmly convinced it was only the will wanting on Miss Eustace's part, and that a word from her would settle the matter. At last, seeing Beatrice, who could bear it no longer, about to leave the cottage, she flung herself at her feet, and bursting into tears, implored her for the love of God, as she hoped for mercy, as she wished to be easy on her death-bed, not to be so hard of heart towards so many helpless children.

"Oh, let me pass!" said Beatrice, "it is cruel to urge me so; I have no power."

"No *power?*" The woman started to her feet, and rage and indignation flashed from her swollen eyes: "no *power?* no, that is the excuse; that will serve your con-

science; let's see how it will serve you at the judgment day! You've no power! but you might *ask*, mightn't you? you might speak to your hard father, who'll listen to you, though not to us, and beg and pray of him to be merciful as he hopes for mercy! you might *ask*, about as much as if you wanted a new gown, or a new bonnet, or a French gimcrack, or a poodle dog! Fellow creatures are worth that much, anyhow, I should think! But no, you've no *heart*, that's what you've not got: you don't care, you rich folks, so long as you've all you want and a great deal you don't know what to do with, whether we starve or not! You'll think differently some day, you will!"

"Come, come, Mrs. Simpson," said Jane, soothingly, "do not talk like that: Miss Eustace feels for you."

"Feels for me? I've let myself down to kneel to her, and it was no use! I've prayed to her instead of to God, and now I pray God against her! May she know what it is to kneel in the dust and not be heard; to ask mercy and not find it; to see shame cast upon her proud head, and cold sorrow gripe her heart, till she has learnt to pity despair, by finding no one to pity her!"

Rage and misery choked her voice, and she gave way to a burst of weeping, that brought her children clinging round her, crying in chorus; and one chubby faced fellow in petticoats, running at Beatrice, struck her with all the strength of his little fist, saying, "You shan't make my mammy cry, you shan't!"

This was too much for Miss Eustace: she turned away without speaking, and slowly left the cottage, and if the woman could have read the interior of the stricken heart she had cursed, she would have thought there was less

difference in their destinies than at present she was inclined to believe.

"Go," said Jane to Julia, her experience giving her the lead where she was generally accustomed to follow, "go after your friend: she will want comforting, and you understand how to deal with those kind of people: I shall stay with Mrs. Simpson.

After such a morning, how could Lady Seymour, to whom Julia told everything, expect her guest to look refreshed, or to have a good appetite for luncheon? The shadow had come back over her face, and hung there heavier than ever; and there was a weariness of manner that spoke distaste to anything like exertion. *Raison de plus*, her hostess thought, for making her exert herself: lying down on the sofa to brood over evils, would only make her worse: out she must go into the garden, with the children, to saw wood, or dig wells, or hunt the hare, it mattered little what, so long as she was kept from thinking. So Charles received a hint, and acted thereupon, and gave her no peace till she had consented to go: and he and George, and Eleanor, and the delighted Paul, laden with tools and materials, piloted the ladies to the place of architecture: and Harry having spread shawls on the turf, they seated themselves to watch the rise and progress of what was to be the very quintessence and perfection of summer-houses. Beatrice, with her back against a tree, looked on indeed, to all appearance, but whether she heeded or not, Julia could not tell: her eye was oftener on the distance than on the workmen: but then that absent, thoughtful look was habitual to her. Julia rejoiced when any dispute arose, as it did perpetually, about nails, and gimlets, in which they were obliged

to interfere; nor could she pity little Charles as much as she would otherwise have done, when he brought a bruised knuckle for Miss Eustace to kiss, and would not be comforted till she had told him a story. The progress of the work itself appeared of comparatively little consequence, and George, who was heart and soul therein, suffered much discouragement from his elders, until three o'clock came, and with it, punctual to a moment, Lionel Revis. He shook hands hastily with the ladies, observing he came to work, not to talk; hung his hat on one tree, and his watch on another, that he might not exceed his limits, and went into the business like another Swiss Family Robinson.

"Whatever you begin, boys, always do it heartily; there is nothing like it; hammer away; nails are not made of spun glass; put life and soul into your work, and you have a better chance of doing it well. Come, Master Harry; you must not stand idle: bear a hand, or you will never be allowed to sit here when it is finished."

Harry laughed, and moved forward: Lionel's voice and example were not to be resisted; every one began to help except Beatrice, and she sat the amused spectatress of the animated bustle. Disputes gave place to jokes and laughter; blunders only added zest to the mirth, especially if the Rector made any: he was so difficult to convince, and when convinced, so impetuous in rectifying. At last there was a general outcry against him, that he was deviating from the original plan; and as Miss Eustace was the designer, she was called upon to decide. It was a knotty point, and she was anxious to please everybody; so, after some consideration, she admitted the charge, but pronounced it an improvement. Lionel left his work,

and came to her side to take the same view. "You think then it ought not to be altered on account of this slight innovation?"

"No, it is better that the comfort of the proprietors should be studied than the amour propre of the artist."

"You are liberal in your views, Miss Eustace; may I venture to draw a moral without giving offence?" said Lionel, in a low voice; so gently that she could not feel alarmed, "will you persevere in doing good, even against opposition, and serve your father's interests with his tenants, by constantly treating them kindly, notwithstanding its being an innovation?"

Beatrice looked at him earnestly; but as she did not appear offended, he was encouraged to proceed. "I see much that others do not, Miss Eustace, and I use a pastor's privilege in thus speaking: you may be a great blessing to your father and his people, if you persist in the benevolent course to which your nature points you: but if you shrink from the exertion, it is to be feared the poor will give you credit for all they have to bear."

"I thank you for the warning," said Beatrice with a sigh. "I shall be less surprised by the accusation a second time; but to avoid it is beyond my power."

"Sister, sister!" cried George at this moment, "oh, sister! what shall we do? here are company coming, and they see us!"

Lionel started at the sound, and looked for his hat: it was gone. Master Charles, unperceived by any one but the page, had carried it off and thrown it over the hedge; and before it was recovered, the company came up, consisting of Mr. Richard Durant and his sister.

Any interruption to the afternoon's amusement would

have been unwelcome; but it was doubly trying when occasioned by people not one of the party wished to see. Mr. Durant was peculiarly happy in making people uncomfortable; and Miss Belinda had a languid drawl in her voice, that was more irritating than a gnat on a sultry night. Miss Eustace resignedly resumed her seat beneath the tree, and Julia had to shake her curls into order, and brush the dust off her dress, and come forward against her will to be agreeable.

"So you are making a summer-house," drawled Miss Durant, "I dare say it will be vastly pretty; I wish you could see the bower dear Richard is building for me. Dear Richard did not approve of any we had already, so he pulled them all down, and the new one is to be the handsomest in the neighbourhood when it is finished: only it takes a long time to do. You will be tired of this *long* before it is done."

"I hope not," said Julia, "so long as Mr. Revis is so good as to superintend."

Mr. Revis, who had only just regained possession of his hat, did not look quite so good-humoured as usual, and glanced impatiently at his watch.

"I hear you go to the school, Miss Seymour," continued Miss Durant, while her brother drew the unwilling Rector aside for conversation. Julia replied in the affirmative, and suggested her doing the same. "No, I never go to such places: dear Richard does not approve of the present mode of education: he has a plan of his own, a very clever plan, which of course you have seen in his pamphlet: and when he gets into Parliament, he will carry it into execution."

"If the House permit him," suggested Beatrice.

"Oh, that of course: there can be but one opinion on the subject."

"Then what are his views, may I ask?"

"Oh, his views; I hardly know how to explain them: every one knows—they are so liberal, so grand, so comprehensive; I can't tell you exactly in what way, but you will find it all in his pamphlet: dear Richard is so *very* clever."

"But how are his plans founded?" asked Julia, "on religious principles, I hope."

"Oh! on right ones you may depend: I don't know what you would call them exactly; dear Richard does not approve of many of the established views of the present day; he thinks we are in an enlightened age, when we don't require so much church-going and priest-governing. You must read his pamphlet; it is so vastly superior: all our friends are wild about it, and would have bought up the whole edition if we had not given them copies. Richard is not mercenary; he only writes for the public good, and he is *so* clever!"

"He must be," said Julia, "if he can dispense with the Church."

"Oh! but do not repeat that before Mr. Revis: it might shock him, and prevent his giving dear Richard his vote, which he must be anxious to do, as they were such friends at school and college. Richard was everything to him there; and as he was so much the cleverest, he could afford to give Mr. Revis a little help now and then." Julia could hardly suppress a burst of indignation; Miss Eustace, seeing wrath in her eye, hastened to avert it by asking if Miss Durant attended their church. "Yes, we have been there; but not very lately: dear Richard does

not like too much church-going: he thinks it narrows the human intellect, and hinders development, and gravitation, I think he said, or something of that kind: he reads essays to us at home, of his own composing, and they are so clever! I wish, Miss Eustace, you would come some Sunday to Ouseley and hear him."

"Thank you," said Beatrice, quietly, "I am afraid they would be far too clever for me."

"Oh! but dear Richard would explain everything; he always does: and he says such beautiful things about equality, and human rights, and philosophy, and centrifugal force—so interesting, and quite deep, you know; deeper, mamma says, than half the sermons she used to hear when she was young, and always attended cathedral service. When he gets into Parliament, you will see what a wonderful change he will make in all those things."

Lionel, in the midst of his conversation with Durant, caught this last speech, and shook his head, with a smile most annoying to his companion.

"Come further away, Revis, never mind my sister's folly; she is no worse than other girls, when they get beyond their depth. Let her flounder out as best she may: I feel sure you will not be biassed by such nonsense."

"You do me only justice for once," said Lionel.

"Once? I have always done you justice; you do not look for fine speeches from me, I should think. I am still as unruly as ever, but my heart is in the right place. You must give me your vote and interest, Revis, for old acquaintance' sake."

"How can I?" said Lionel, "when our principles are so opposed?"

"Not opposed in their end and aim; we both seek the

good of man, only in different ways, and so the good be done, what matters how?"

"It matters everything in religion," said the Rector. "I anticipated this request, Durant, and it gives me more pain to refuse than you will probably believe, but refuse I must; I shall probably not vote at all."

"Likely!" said Durant, satirically glancing at the young ladies, "with my lord and Sir John on each side of you, in the persons of their fair daughters: bower building, and flower planting on summer afternoons; we all know what that means, and what it leads to. Hardly fair though, Revis, to monopolise both: but that is your plan; half squire, half popular preacher; do you take out a gun on the 1st?"

Lionel smiled good humouredly, "No, no, the *canon* is enough for me."

"A pun, as I live! and from Revis the wrangler, who is supposed to dream in Greek, and think in algebra! come, I have some hopes of you;" Durant eyed him askance as he spoke, "you will rattle a dice-box with the worst of us before you have done."

Lionel Revis started as if he had been stung, passionate indignation flashed in his whole countenance, and shook his erect frame as if with a tempest. His hand clenched the iron rail against which he had leant, as if to leave the impression of his fingers on the metal, while he stood struggling with the fierce spirit raging within him, and urging him to dash the sneerer to the ground. All eyes turned upon him, and Julia recalled at once that terrible expression she had seen in his face once before. Not knowing in the hurry of her alarm, what might happen next, she ran between them, and asked what was the

matter, the worst thing that she could have done. Lionel could not speak, but he made a hasty bow to her and Miss Eustace, pushed by Durant, and striding rapidly to the nearest hedge, cleared it by a bound, and was out of sight in an instant.

Durant bit his glove as he looked after him, and muttering that he would repent it if he thwarted his plans, turned to the ladies to pay his respects, but was indifferently received: Miss Eustace was frigid, Julia snappish; the children murmured audibly at the loss of their trusty comrade, and after several attempts he gave it up, and carried off his sister, with a sarcastic expression of commiseration for their disappointment, that irritated them beyond measure. How his character fared in his absence, the reader may judge: Julia had not seen Beatrice so energetic before: she gave vent to her sentiments with a pungency that May might have emulated, and after they had come to the conclusion that Miss Belinda was insufferable, and that Iago was an angel compared with "dear Richard," they were able with tolerable composure to go in and dress for dinner.

May was waiting in Julia's room; yearning to unburden herself of a mysterious piece of intelligence; Mrs. Hargrave and Mrs. Barnard had called the day before, and the former had paid a long visit to the sick stranger: well! after Mr. Revis had left home in the evening, arrived a carriage with a maid servant in it, to fetch her away: and in spite of all that could be said or done, she *was* fetched away, with her own free will, it appeared, and carried off, nobody knew where! could Julia throw a light on the subject? Not a spark: it was very mysterious, and all of a piece with the whole of Mrs. Hargrave's

proceedings; they talked it over during her toilette, as well as a variety of other matters, not necessary to recount here: till May suddenly expressed her great desire to see the Miss Eustace she had heard so much of. Julia posted her at the door, and then summoned her guest to go down to dinner, and as she came out in her elegant evening dress, May's wish was fully gratified. "A pretty creature, a very pretty creature," she thought to herself, "and a sweet smile and a kind eye. It's a great pity she should be so thankless to those who serve her."





CHAPTER VII.

FTER this day of battles, things took a much quieter turn at the Lodge: Miss Eustace made no more attempts to visit the poor, but entered zealously into all plans for their benefit, and surprised the collectors with the largeness of her donations; only stipulating they should be employed anonymously. Julia had to tear herself from her company to perform her share of parochial duties, and was sorely tempted at times to play truant; but to her credit be it spoken, she resisted the temptation, and faithfully kept all her engagements. Jane Barnard tried to be satisfied with this, but alas! there were no more of their long walks, no more poetical discussions, none of the schemes they had planned, to which she had looked forward so long: she was invited to the Lodge again and again, and pressed to join their rambles, and their carpentering and everything that went on; but that was not what she cared for: Lady Clara Vere de Vere would be always present, and her company was more distasteful than ever. Jane had accidentally caught a view of herself and her unconscious rival, reflected in a glass, and the vision of her own unattractive person and homely costume, compared with the graceful beauty and faultless dress of the peer's daughter, had

haunted her ever since. Miss Eustace, hearing from her friend how excellent Jane was, made several attempts to conciliate her, and was much mortified by her ill success. She persevered as long as she could, and gave up at last, under the belief that she must have some grievous quality, which so good a person could not approve, and while Jane was imagining Beatrice despising her want of rank, Beatrice was distracting her brain to find out a way to deserve Jane's esteem: so dangerous is it to be guided by prejudice. With this slight drawback, for Julia was vexed by her old friend's coldness to her new one, there was a considerable amount of pleasure and satisfaction in those bright August days at the Lodge. The atmosphere of love and good humour, the mild piety of Lady Lovel, Lady Seymour's cordiality, and Julia's devotion, the merry voices of the children, with whom she was most deservedly a favourite, and the perfect freedom from misconstruction and tyranny, had an effect on the spirits of Miss Eustace that more than corroborated the good judgment of her hostess. Each day showed its improvements in increase of appetite, more inclination for exercise, more colour on the cheek, and more radiance in the eye. True, all these were but slight, but to have gained ground at all, was something: the interest they all took in her progress endeared her to their hearts, and tears stood in Lady Lovel's eyes when she saw her, surrounded by the children, helping to prepare the tea in the new arbour, on the evening of its first opening.

"If anything were needed to convince me the reports of her ill-usage were true," she said to Sir John, "it would be the change wrought in that gentle creature's face since she has been here. Why will parents ever punish them-

selves by using severity when love would effect all they want?"

"Very true," said Sir John, "she is a sweet young thing, certainly; she has been over-driven, that's plain; ridden on a sharp curb, with a mouth that winces at a hair; it is an uncommon pity, for it has broken her spirit, and if she has the true Eustace blood in her, it is high enough in all conscience. How well I remember, as I was telling her to-day, only it seemed to make her nervous, that awful time of the epidemic, when she was born! I shall never forget it; we lived next door to them in Grosvenor Place, and lost two servants ourselves by the disorder, but at our great neighbour's there were his widowed sister, the late Lady Eustace, and his wife, both confined, and said to be doing well one day—and the next, of the two mothers and two infants, that young thing was the only one left! And such a fine creature as poor Lady Eustace was! I don't think she was ever great friends with my lord, and you know if her baby had lived, he would not have been what he is; it was lucky for him as it happened, but it shocked everybody at the time. You knew Miss Eustace's mother, I think."

"Yes, intimately: and she was as unlike her daughter as possible; an active, sprightly little woman, whose face was sunshine, and whose voice was song. Who is that coming up the gravel walk?" said Lady Lovel, interrupting herself to put on her spectacles.

"It is Mr. Revis. I say!" said Sir John, slowly, turning to his venerable companion with raised eyebrows of shrewd meaning; "it is something new his coming here so often: what is his object, do you suppose?"

Who could tell? the idea had occurred to some minds

occasionally already, but no one could be certain of anything beyond the fact, that though no duty was seen neglected, the parish visited as closely, the Sunday sermon composed as carefully as usual, Lionel Revis, somehow or other, contrived to find time to look in at the Lodge nearly every day: never without being welcome, and at each visit more welcome than before. One and all delighted in his presence, feeling as if his participation stamped value on their most trifling pursuit, and never receiving a visit, without remembering afterwards something he had said or done which had a tendency for good on their minds. But why he came so frequently, nobody knew.

Often, amid the changed scenes and feelings of after life, when even her enthusiastic temperament had experienced the quieting influence of time, did Julia Seymour look back on that period as to one of the most fascinating spots on memory's expanse. Those morning studies of German and Italian, music, drawing, and moral philosophy; those merry afternoons of agriculture, horticulture, and architecture, according as the spirit of the hour directed: those confidential lounges under shady trees, when she first ventured to open her warm heart in words to the charming friend who had read it already; and in return, learned more of hers than Beatrice could have told to any one less guileless and sincere; the delightful drives in her pony carriage, with Charles between them, escorted by Harry on horseback, and George on Flip; when they explored all the pretty spots in the neighbourhood, and occasionally were put on their mettle to avoid Lord Eustace or Mrs. Hargrave: and last, not least, the society of Lionel Revis, becoming every day more necessary to her content, and more fascinating to her imagination, than

any one but May had any idea of: it was a happy time, and all the happier for her not neglecting her duties. Indeed it seemed really easy to do right and be useful, when Beatrice loved to hear her read holy books, and Lionel encouraged all her exertions, and her kind grandmamma remarked with smiles she was glad to see her treading the heroine's road: such bright spots occur now and then in life: but like the pilgrim's "delicate plain of ease," they are too quickly travelled over. A little happiness is an excellent perfume; it gives health to the cheek, and marrow to the bones, but too long exposed to the air, it loses at once its aroma and its power. It is only the leaf of the Tree of Life we meet with on our journey: its fruit is reserved for our Father's table at home.

George and Eleanor now came running in to cling round their father's neck, and proffer a petition, that he would fix to-morrow for their promised pic-nic. It had been talked of so long, and the fine weather was going, and so were Miss Eustace and Harry, and nothing was settled yet. Nothing could be settled, till the Rector's opinion was had, and many fears arose lest he should have some tiresome committee, or sermon, or sick old woman to make him say no Sound of joy unutterable! he was disengaged; that is, as much as he ever should be: sufficiently so to promise to join them at Bramble Wood, the genuine pic-nic name of the spot fixed upon. So there was nothing more to do but to coax mamma and the cook into a liberal supply of good things; invite two or three juvenile friends, besides Jane and the Lloyds, secure May, without whom there could be no pleasure, insist on Miss Eustace's saying she had never heard of anything more

delightful in her life, and go excited and joyous to-bed, rather earlier than usual, to bring on the blissful day all the sooner.

Jane would not go, though Sir John walked down to her house to press her; but Miss Letty Bellamy looked so very anxious, that he could not help extending his invitation, and it was agreed she should fill her sister's place, to the bitter envy of Hetty, who was out at the time: and somewhat to the discomposure of Julia. But it was not a day to show any discontent: everything was favourable; fine weather, good roads, cheerful companions, merry voices, and to all appearance, light hearts. Miss Lloyd, who had various misgivings about her last speech to Beatrice, was a little shy at first of accosting her, but when she did so, and was greeted with the gentle smile that bore no shadow of resentment or pride, she began to hate herself for having ever done her wrong. Lady Seymour remained at home with her mother, but left nothing unsuperintended, even to Miss Eustace's equipment. "My dear, you are never going in that transparent bonnet: you will catch your death of cold coming home: be obedient and reasonable, and wear something that will be of a little service, though perhaps less fashionable. You have a strong silk bonnet, do put it on at once."

Miss Eustace was too little accustomed to resistance to make any against such a command: she changed her cool head gear for a hot one, and comforted herself in secret, by resolving to do without the first opportunity. Two pony chaises and the spring cart conveyed all the members of the party, except one or two on donkeys, and without any adventure worth mentioning they reached Bramble Wood.

The spot selected was at the foot of a half circle of wild romantic crags; on one side of which ran down a clear stream, which mingled with the river a little below: the sides were thickly covered with blackberry bushes and fern: several fragments of rock and stone had fallen from the summit, and seemed on purpose for sylvan seats: and a smooth carpet of turf in the centre for the spreading of the gipsy feast. The carriages were put up at a small public house about a quarter of a mile off: the donkeys were allowed to graze; Gotham and Paul brought the provision hampers, with the assistance of Harry and George, while May and the little girls set about lighting a fire, without which the pleasure would have been quite incomplete. Julia sat down to sketch, according to a promise made to her grandmamma, and Beatrice stood by her, watching the progress of her pencil, and adding a suggestion now and then which improved the whole effect. But the latter was not allowed to remain long in one place: first her advice must be had in the arranging of the banquet, to decide the contested claims of cold lamb and boiled fowl: then the fire declined burning, do what they might, and she must pick sticks, and help to blow the rebellious embers: then Charles, in defiance of the laws of nature, must needs hunt for blackberries in August, and Beatrice must hold back the thorny branches that he might thrust in his little fat hand without getting scratched; and all these claims were yielded to with such sweet good temper, it was unanimously wondered at how they could ever have enjoyed a pic-nic before. Not so Miss Letty Bellamy, whom nothing seemed to please: she had been disappointed in having no cavalier to escort her all the way: Harry Seymour, whom she was disposed

to treat as a man, in consideration of his future baronetcy, had shown no symptoms of admiration, and paid her no more civilities than he could help: the stones were hard, the grass must be damp, the bushes tore her gown, the fire smoked her gloves; the fun of the boys was rudeness: the remarks of May were impertinence: Julia was stupid for sitting down to draw: Miss Eustace was proud, for mixing with the rest, instead of forming a private friendship with her: in short, she was out of humour, and everybody wished she had remained at home.

"Bless me, my dear!" cried Miss Lloyd, when she could bear her mutterings no longer, "what a pity it is you came at all! You don't expect to find Turkey carpets and damask curtains in Bramble Wood, do you? When I was as young as you are, the very thoughts of such a party would have kept me awake for a week: I enjoy it now as much as any of them: what, Master Charlie! have you torn your hand with the bushes? I thought you would: never mind, I have plenty of sticking plaster: there, let Miss Eustace put it on, and you'll like it better: I put a large piece in my pocket-book on purpose: so don't mind asking, young gentlemen: it's a pleasure, no trouble. Mr. Henry, I am sure you hurt yourself just now with that basket."

Harry thanked her, but he was used to such things; she should see some of the fellows at Harrow after football, then she would understand they did not mind a scratch.

"Yes, that's all very well," said she, "but I do not like those games: such shocking accidents happen sometimes: I cannot see the pleasure of anything that leads to scratches and bruises. Sir John may shake his head and

laugh at my foolishness, but I cannot imagine how he can bear to ride out in the depth of winter, on a pouring wet day, through mud and water, and get torn by the hedges, and kicked, and thrown off by the horses, and all—"

"Stop, stop," cried Sir John, "I deny that last indictment! I was never thrown off in my life."

"Oh, my dear Sir John! not when you were laid on your back for I don't know how many weeks?"

"No, we rolled together then, old Foxglove and I: and neither by his fault nor mine."

"Well, well, you rolled then: there is not much difference, as far as the bones are concerned: I only want to know, what can the pleasure be? Here, Eleanor, my dear, you may open this basket, and take out my contribution to the feast: you're welcome to it all, and I wish it was better."

The sight of jam, almonds and raisins, and gingerbread nuts drew a shout from all the children, and it was immediately re-echoed from the top of the crag. This was a charming discovery, and must be improved forthwith: and all began to invoke the echo at once, and then wonder they could not make out the answer, when instead of responding as in duty bound, the echo had the impertinence to laugh: and Lionel's head was seen over the crag. Julia could not resist the impulse of sketching him into her drawing, which she immediately thrust out of sight: and the Rector, with an agility that set the boys on fire with ambition, speedily swung himself down, and stood in the midst of the group. The feast, which had only waited his arrival, was declared to be ready, and as he stepped forward to assist, he whispered to Marian Mayflower, who looked quickly in his face. "Anything amiss, sir?"

"Not at present: but there are strange looking people about: say nothing, but keep the children within sight, that is all."

Sir John, who was in exuberant spirits, now clapped his hands as a signal to sit down. "Have the ladies dressed for dinner?" asked old Mr. Lloyd, looking round through his eye-glass.

"No, no," chuckled the Baronet, "we brought no Abigails but May, who is to wait entirely upon me, and nobody else. We are a *no-maidic* tribe just at present; hey, Julia? as your old favourite John Peerybingle would say, '*Very near?*'"

This was not an occasion for puns to be treated with the scorn to which Sydney Smith so ungratefully consigned them: the children were charmed that "Papa was going to be funny," and did their best to encourage him.

"We are like a swarm of bees," observed George, as the party clustered together round the well-covered table-cloth.

"Yes," said Sir John, handing Beatrice to the most prominent seat on the rock, where there was a slab covered with shawls for her to rest against, "we are a hive just swarming, and here is our Queen Bee; isn't she, Charlie?"

Charlie shouted his assent, and glasses were speedily filled to the health of her majesty, and all through the repast it was who could spin the joke out longest, and Miss Lloyd called her "honey," and Harry said his hair was untidy, and he must beg a bit of her comb: and Mr. Lloyd dubbed her the fair Melissa: and Mr. Revis hinted at the fourth Georgic, (which Gotham explained to Paul was an allusion to Her Majesty's late lamented uncle, George the

Fourth) and Sir John, forgetting his good resolutions, was beginning some riddle about the Hivites, when a look from Lionel made him stop short, and turn it off with a sepulchral attempt at a cough that made a box of lozenges leap from Miss Lloyd's pocket like the sword from the scabbard of chivalry. He soon recovered himself, however, and turned the laugh on his monitor. "Now ladies and gentlemen, and our most gracious and mellifluous sovereign, I have a riddle to put, which I hope will be followed by many more. Who is that distinguished man of letters, to whom one letter more would be a correction?"

Everybody looked serious, and it was evident by the motion of all the lips, they were repeating to themselves the names of all the literati they knew: a significant glance at Lionel, however, changed the current of the general idea, and all began at once, "Revis—Revis—one letter more—oh! that makes *Revise*—Oh papa! Oh Sir John!"

"It is some comfort to hear," said Lionel, gravely, "that I can be corrected with *ee*s."

"Really this is frightful," said Mr. Lloyd, polishing his eyeglass, "and strange to say, the contagion is seizing even me. Tell me, Sir John, fair and forty as you are, why are you like Othello on board ship? I must tell it you, for fear you should guess: because you are a *Sea-Moor!*"

"Well," said Miss Lloyd, "after that, Davy, I think even *I* might begin; but I must hear one from Mr. Greatheart first: his namesake put forth riddles, so he need not be ashamed of doing the same."

"I have not made one since I left St. John's," said

Lionel, "so if mine is very bad, you must excuse its roughness for its truth. How would your place be filled if you were to leave us now ? "

"Easily enough, I'm sure, anywhere."

"That is as we think: and our opinion is that our pleasure would be *alloyed* in a Lloyd's absence."

A worse pun would have passed under such a compliment, and the pleased old lady, while disclaiming the latter, secretly thought it the prettiest piece of wit she had ever heard in her life. Lionel was accused by Sir John of having composed it weeks before; which he protested was unfair and discouraging, and savoured strongly of envy. He would countenance such proceedings no further: the next person who made a pun should be sent to keep guard over the long eared steeds grazing tranquilly among the furze: to restore the rationality of the assembly, he must request a little music. So after some discussion, Sir John, Julia, and Harry, sang a glee, and then Miss Eustace and Julia a duet, and then Miss Lloyd was prevailed upon to favour the company with her only song, "Merrily every bosom boundeth," and merrily every bosom did bound, whenever she came to that trying "O—h!" which invariably lighted on some impossible note, without in the least discomposing the performer. Mr. Lloyd, whose favourite piece it was, sat listening with his head bent in placid enjoyment, keeping time with foot and hand, and when at last, the "cheerilies" were concluded amid a thunder of applause, turned exultingly to Miss Eustace to ask if it was not capital?

"It is Miss Eustace's turn now," interrupted Miss Lloyd; and everybody seconded the suggestion. Beatrice did not say, like Miss Letty Bellamy, that she could only

sing Italian, and *never* without her music: she merely observed that she knew nothing so well adapted to the occasion as what had just been sung, for hers were all more or less *andante*.

"Never mind," said Julia, "we have had the Lydian measures: it is time to think of "Darius great and good." Beatrice accordingly sang the following verses to a simple, plaintive air, and the mighty master himself need not have blushed to own such melody.

"Give me the lyre, and I will sing:
And if my song too mournful seem,
'Tis that with every cadence ring
The echoes of a sadder theme!

"Hushed are the chords of guileless mirth,
And tuneless love's enchanted strain:
The beautiful is gone from earth—
The mute realities remain.

"Who shall recall the bright belief
In glorious things, that could not last—
Or tinge the dull autumnal leaf
With the fresh glow of roses past?

"O memory, sweet as welcome's greeting,
As beauty's smile, or childhood's sleep—
Oh! wherefore are thy waves so fleeting?
Or wherefore are thy springs so deep?"

"That is but a sorrowful theory, Miss Eustace," said Lionel, when the thanks and praise of the audience were over, and the children had sprung up to play at banditti: "I am the more disposed to quarrel with it, that I often find things look brighter in retrospect, than they really did at the time of possession. Ask Eleanor and George a month or two hence, for particulars touching this party of ours, and see if the description grow not into hyperbole:

if our banquet was not ambrosial; our wit as brilliant as original: our songs all equal to your own. Or if you are at Eastbury in the winter, put a few questions to Sir John at the close of a day's sport, and see if the enchantment of memory cannot embellish the past!"

"Now, what are you saying about me?" cried the Baronet, "I wish your uncle, Sir Geoffrey, were here, to tell us an anecdote or two of your first attempts, and whether you never picked up a bird, and declared you had shot it. Lucky fellow that you were, at your age, to get into such a country as that. Now, Revis, on your conscience, consistency and uncle Edmund quite out of the question, did you not sometimes repent your choice? Would you not, now and then, gladly have exchanged a flat cap for a round one: chapel bell for the bugle, and the lecture room for the fresh hill side?"

Lionel coloured, and was silent at first; till Julia's eyes eagerly fixed on his face, compelled him to reply, "Thank God, I can safely say no. I had learned for what end I was created, and to work out that end was sufficient for all my ambition."

"And what is the end of our creation?" asked Julia.

It was a question not to be answered in a moment: every one began to ponder, for though the same idea was in most minds, each had a different method of defining it.

"For what end were we sent into the world?" Harry was the first to answer, "To distinguish ourselves, of course."

Sir John. "To be a great deal better than we are."

Julia. "To sacrifice ourselves for God and man."

Mr. Lloyd. "To be monuments of God's patience."

Miss Lloyd. "To help each other."

Miss Bellamy. "O, pray don't ask me! I never could answer such questions! I haven't an idea!"

Miss Eustace. "To learn to *die.*"

Lionel. "To learn to *live*—for God, in God, with God, for ever."

This led to a discussion, more serious than some of the party would have chosen, but fraught with deep interest to Julia, to whose young enquiring mind it had often happened, to revolve in doubt and perplexity what was her particular sphere in creation? Lionel grew warm and eloquent: he spoke of life, its snares, its trials, its work, its glorious rest: painted in glowing colours the blessedness of sowing precious seed round the daily path, which may spring up a harvest of joy long after the sower is gone: compared the honest, heartfelt peace, attendant on duty simply, trustfully performed, with the joyless eye-service; the gnawing self-reproach; the weary silencing of conscience, that makes bitter even the rest of the negligent and slothful. And though Miss Letty yawned behind her handkerchief, and Sir John grew a little restless whenever anything touched him too nearly; to the rest of the party there was something very inspiriting in the light he threw on the subject, and even Beatrice, at that moment, felt her heart burn within her: though little aware how deep was his anxiety that she should indeed listen and be convinced. The conversation broke off when they rose, to give the servants opportunity for refreshment; the children too, insisted on the elders joining their sports, and between desert islands, and hide and seek, and other popular pastimes, the time passed quickly away. The afternoon was far advanced, when Beatrice, who had resumed her rocky throne for rest, was startled by per-

ceiving a figure lurking behind a clump of trees. She beckoned to Sir John, and pointed in silence: the baronet used no such precaution, but rushed with a shout to investigate the mystery, and if necessary, to chastise. However he soon came back. "It is only two of your people, Miss Eustace, who are very urgent to speak to you—Simpson and Rogers. Won't you see them?"

Miss Eustace could not refuse, though the very thought of petitions she had no means of granting, sickened her heart. The two men came up to her, and made a half sullen bow. "Beg pardon, my lady," said Simpson, "we've been waiting about ever so long to speak to you; but it's to *yourself* we want to speak."

"And what is it you wish to say?" asked Beatrice, signing to her friends to stand aside, "what do you want?"

"Just this ma'am," said Rogers, "we wants *justice*. My lord has put us both out of our cottages, and we hope you'll be good enough to take a hint, and see us righted, afore we rights ourselves!"

"I hope you will, ma'am," added Simpson, "it is a dreadful thing to be so treated, and see one's children want, it makes a man desperate, ma'am."

"But why do you come to me?" said Miss Eustace, gently, "you must know I have nothing to do with these cases."

"Well, ma'am," said Rogers, "that's hard to believe, seeing as how you'll come into it all, bye and bye: you share the profits of our labour, so I suppose you think a little of our rights: any way it's time you did!"

"Are you threatening, my friend?" said Beatrice.

His countenance grew more sinister. "You may call

it what you please: mind my words, lady! if you won't help us, you can't be surprised that we help ourselves; if your father makes us hate him, it's his fault, not ours, and a harder heart than his never was upon the earth before!"

"I cannot hear this," interrupted Miss Eustace, with spirit, "it is impossible for me to interfere, and equally so to listen to such language."

"Then you won't help us?" said Rogers, fiercely.

"I cannot:" Miss Eustace was terrified at the expression of his face, and her companions not liking the man's gesture, made a step forward.

"Then there's my thanks for your goodness," and maddened with passion, the man swung a stick round and aimed a blow at her head. Happily she saw it in time to shrink down, and the end of the cudgel meeting the rock, the force of the stroke was much deadened, but it was severe enough to crush her bonnet, and leave her almost stunned.

Lionel saw the outrage, but not in time to avert it: he leaped on the ruffian like a bloodhound, wrested the stick from his grasp, and as he made a rush to escape, stimulated his progress and relieved his own feelings, by hurling such a blow across his shoulders as made him jump three feet from the ground. Harry and Sir John, snatching up one a donkey whip and the other a camp stool, darted in pursuit, and the rest crowded round the spot where the Rector was kneeling to support Miss Eustace. Her escape from serious injury was almost miraculous: the strong silk bonnet had done its duty, and headache, and dizzy faintness could be borne, from the recollection that it might have been so much worse. Indeed, Beatrice, after she had recovered sufficiently to stand up, and

see things in their natural position, instead of dancing round as they did at first, testified much less alarm than might have been expected; and considerably less than she had shown during the thunderstorm. Her first thought was to assure them all she was quite well: her second to hope the man had not been roughly handled. Lionel shook his head at that, having a strong idea that he would not soon forget his own parting blow: adding, that he was glad they had both got off, for he felt at the moment in such a rage, he was not sure what might have been the consequence.

"Yes," cried little Charles, throwing himself in the arms of Beatrice, "it was very wicked to hurt my dear Queen Bee, and I hate him, that I do!"

"Hush," said Beatrice, stroking his curls, "we must hate nobody: the man thought I had been unkind, and he struck me in a passion. I dare say he is sorry now."

Charles heartily hoped he was, but it did not comfort him at all: he sat with his head in her lap, not crying, but trembling all over; and every now and then murmuring, "It *was* very wicked to hurt my Queen Bee, it was!"

The mirth of the whole party was effectually damped; and when Sir John and Harry returned after a fruitless chase, announcing they had seen about half a dozen other fellows hanging about the woods, no opposition was raised to Miss Lloyd's suggestion, that they should forthwith set out homewards. Sir John only stipulated for something to drink first, and Gotham, while searching the hamper for a glass, began to utter his feelings to May. "My late master the Doctor, Mrs. Mayflower, was in the habit of remarking, that where once a prejudice has taken root in the human mind, it is as difficult to eradicate as a dis-

ease: nay, more so, for the resources of medicine are infinite, but the arguments of reason are comparatively few."

"Possibly," muttered May, who was on her knees before the crockery basket, "it is easier to pound a pill, than to make a wise man out of a fool: as I dare say your master found in his dealings with you."

"I am not aware, Mrs. Mayflower, to what you refer: I alluded to the discrepancy between the widely diffused accusations against my Lord Eustace's liberality, and the proofs I had so frequently received of his munificence: whence I felt entitled to draw the conclusion touching the strong effects of prejudice."

"For my part," said May, "I believe there's not a word said against my Lord that he does not richly deserve: he would give to the poor as he did to you, if it served his purpose; but nothing out of charity or good will: so I think, Mr. Gotham, you had better attend to your present master, than talk about your late one, and not stand drawing conclusions when you ought to be drawing corks."

The Rector rode with the cavalcade all the way home; and the ladies felt much safer under his protection: indeed had an army of Chartists blocked the road, they were confident he would make a way for them, by eloquence or force. Miss Bellamy, now that Beatrice appeared recovered, thought proper to absorb a great deal of attention, by a series of interesting little alarms; seeing faces in all the bushes, and hearing pursuers in every breeze. Lionel, with polite good nature, rode backwards and forwards half a dozen times to convince her nobody was near: but conjecturing at last, her fear was more assumed than genuine, resolved to give her ideas a new turn. Riding

to her side of the carriage, he asked her in a low voice if she had any particular reason for fearing an attack. Oh, no, how could she? she hardly knew any of the people. So Mr. Revis thought, and the belief had given him much pain: he had heard, indeed, several anecdotes that distressed him about the behaviour of herself and sister, to their humbler neighbours: and in his gentlest manner, a manner that no one had ever yet been able to resist, he pointed out to her how much happier, how much more respected she would be, if she endeavoured to find pleasure in duty, and win the hearts of the poor by kindness. To employ them as if in charity and then keep back their dues, was nothing short of dishonesty: handsome clothes so obtained, were badges of oppression, and for his part, he would rather wear a smock frock honestly paid for, than ermine and purple at the expense of a labourer's suffering. Miss Letty was much astonished at being thus addressed, and at first attempted to deny the charge, but soon yielded, and shed a few tears, promising amendment, and to pay all she owed, as soon as she had the money. It was only to Mrs. Plowden for dress-making, and Ellen Dennet, for plaiting a bonnet, and Mrs. Wortley for some trinkets, that she owed anything at all: at the same time as Mr. Revis well knew, their means were very small. He *did* know it: and he was ready to make all allowances; but if Miss Bellamy really wished to be out of debt, would she like to work it out? She stared: he repeated the question: he had work that must be done for the poor people; more than could be accomplished in the school; he must pay some one to do it, and if Miss Letitia had a mind to earn the money, he would have pleasure in handing it to her, and respect her for her independent spirit.

And with that he left her side, and moved on to Julia and Miss Eustace.

Letty Bellamy had never been so dealt with in her life; tears of mortification rolled down her cheeks: and at one time she felt as if she would never speak to or look at him again; but this gave way to a better feeling as she recalled his kind brotherly manner; and the light in which he had described her pecuniary obligations, made her feel an intense desire to be quit for them. In short, before they parted, she had closed with his proposal, and received in return a warm shake of the hand, that told his appreciation of the effort.

It was not till the party were assembled in the drawing-room, and the adventure of the day recounted, that any one noticed the change in the appearance of little Charles. Instead of jumping from lap to lap, shouting and singing and defying the claims of his pillow, he remained seated with his head leaning against Miss Eustace, and his eyes looked heavy, and his cheeks flushed and burning. One after another noticed it, and tried to rouse him up, but he only burst into a fit of crying, and clung the closer to his dear Queen Bee. Beatrice took him on her lap, and soothed him with soft words and kisses: but a chill struck through her heart as she looked at his face, and read the signs, never to be mistaken by those who have once watched illness coming on. Her dismay communicated itself to the rest. Lady Seymour carried him off to bed, with a sarcastic compliment to Lionel on the brilliant success of his party. He was nearly making a vow never to have anything to do with another; he had done it all for the best; to give the children an innocent pleasure, and try what the beauties of nature would do for the me-

lancholy he longed to cure; but his scheme had been turned into trouble; and disappointment was his only reward. All he could do now was to cheer their spirits, and pray with more than usual warmth for a blessing on their family circle. But Charles grew worse in the night, and in the morning was alarmingly ill.

A sad change now passed over the cheerful grey house, where had recently been so much happiness; and to add to the general anxiety, Lady Lovel, in descending the stairs from the nursery, slipped and was severely hurt, so as to be also confined to her room; George and Eleanor, for fear of infection, were despatched to the care of May, at the Rectory, and Lady Seymour would have thought it her duty to dismiss her visitor also, but one glance of her imploring eyes disarmed her half-formed purpose. No one knew exactly how Beatrice first introduced herself into Charlie's sick room, but once there, no one could have wished to take her away. Her noiseless step, light touch, low soft voice, all seemed made for a nurse's office, combined with multiplicity of resource, and most loving solicitude. She thought of various things that escaped Lady Seymour: was never restless with the confinement of the dark room, or impatient of the suffering and wayward child's caprices: the languid inertion of her ordinary mood gave place to a quiet energy, that kept her wakeful through the night, and gave her strength in the day. Her hostess made several attempts to prevent her thus tasking her powers, but yielded to her tearful entreaties; the more readily that Charles was never quiet without her, and started often in his feverish dozes to sob out, how cruel it was to hurt his poor Queen Bee.

No one could tell what secret tie knit her soul so closely

to that restless suffering boy: but hour after hour passed away, and still she would sit patiently by his bedside: her hands at times employed in work mechanically gone through, but oftener clasped on her knee: fatigue casting its pallor on her cheek; intense feeling lighting her eye with unearthly fire; reading the troubled page of the present, through the lurid glare of the past: bowing down before the stroke of chastisement, but not daring to believe in mercy. Lady Seymour, whose vigilance as a nurse was more of the active than passive nature, and whom anxiety and suspense compelled to be in perpetual motion, was startled more than once, when through the dim light of the sick room, her eye suddenly fell on that quiet watching figure, leaning back against the wall with the dark braided hair, and drooping head, and "the world of dreamy gloom," in the deep, mournful, lustrous eyes, whose shadow grew darker as the days passed on. It was nevertheless a comfort to have one so useful and so sympathising ever at hand, when Julia was obliged to devote herself to nursing her grandmamma: Lady Seymour, like many energetic people, was apt in seasons of anxiety to wear herself out with fidget, and the gentleness of Miss Eustace was like dew to her fevered nerves. Long and trying were the hours of watching they passed together, as the boy's disorder gained ground: bitter was the anguish that at times overflowed both their hearts, though drawn from different sources, and sorrowful indeed the conviction that forced itself on their reason, that neither of them possessed that strong, trusting faith, that alone could cheer them in moments like these.

There was one drawback to Miss Eustace's qualifications as a nurse, and that was most important; nothing

would induce her to give the child his appointed medicines: any other office, however menial, she rendered cheerfully; but this she shrunk from with a nervous aversion that it was impossible to argue with. Charles, unfortunately, was a most wayward patient; and the hourly battle to make him swallow what was ordered, much impeded his progress; sometimes he would cry for his Queen Bee to give it him, which always had the effect of driving her from the room; when he would fix on the most unattainable person he could think of, and rebel vehemently if not indulged; and Lady Seymour's much prized authority melted in her grasp, as if she had been one of the foolish mothers she was in the habit of denouncing so severely. But one day the doctor had pronounced the slightest agitation to be fearfully perilous, and the hour of medicine had arrived—medicine as important as the air he breathed—and the nurses trembled with doubt and dread, and asked each other what was to be done. And Lionel Revis's voice, never unwelcome, was heard making enquiries in the hall; Miss Eustace caught the mother's eye, received an assenting nod, and flew down to request he would try the effect of his influence. He could not refuse; she pointed out the way, and remained below; Lionel thought he heard a carriage as he ascended the stairs, and mechanically rejoiced in his own escape. Lady Seymour met him at the door, but could only press his hand nervously; he walked straight up to the bed, took the glass in his hand, and saying in a tone of quiet command, "Come, Charlie, down with it," the potion was swallowed before the surprised child had time to think. But the duty performed; the large blue eyes, hollow and bright with fever, so deeply sunk in the wasted little cheek, that had pressed

his so merrily when he saw it last, looked up in Lionel's face, and overcame the strong man as if he were a feeble child. With a faltering "God keep thee," he turned hastily away, and escaped down to the library, lest any one should detect his tears.

He had meant to offer consolation to the mother, but the memory of his little sister's death-bed choked the words of faith and hope; as his best amends, he sat down to pen a note, in which he expressed his warm sympathy, and commended her to the Comforter of souls: the paper was moistened more than once as he wrote, but that he could not help. The note written, he was considering whether to escape through the garden, or brave the visitors, when he was disturbed by the sound of voices close at hand, he knew not where. Miss Eustace's soft notes were not to be mistaken; the other he conjectured to be the voice of Mrs. Hargrave. The argument between them was evidently keen and excited: harsh on the elder lady's part, reproachful on that of Beatrice; Mrs. Hargrave was insisting on something the other refused, and at last as words grew higher, Lionel heard an expression that made him start to his feet. The next instant a door he had not observed, being painted to imitate the book-shelves, burst hastily open; a retreating voice was heard in angry taunting accents, "Yes, see how Lady Seymour would trust her child with you, if she knew how your cousin Edward died!" and Miss Eustace stood before him alone.

Face to face they stood, both too horror-struck to move: it needed no words to tell the unhappy young lady that last sentence had been heard: his fixed look, his parted lips, his cheek as pale as her own, spoke a language

only too intelligible. She made an attempt to reach a chair, but would have fallen but for his assistance. He opened the window to give her air: she sobbed convulsively, but did not weep; her eyes still rested on his face with that wild look of agony, and the words burst from her quivering lips, "Oh, Mr. Revis! do not condemn me unheard!"

"Condemn?" repeated Lionel.

"Yes, why use another word? you heard enough to do so; you should hear more to make you merciful. Oh! how often I have thought, if ours were but the Church of Rome, I might kneel at your confessional, and tell all, and be absolved!"

"And do you really believe," said Lionel, gently, "that my advice and sympathy would be more sincerely yours, if I could enforce your confidence by unscriptural threats? Tell me what you think fit: let me know what burdens your conscience, that I may then bid you lay it on Him, who alone can give or withhold pardon."

"Pardon!" she repeated slowly, "and who shall say I need pardon? yet, who needs it more;" and she sunk back in her chair, with her eyes still fixed on his—colourless, tearless, scarcely appearing to breathe—more like a draped statue of melancholy than a being that felt and suffered. It was the bitterness of remorse, without the degrading consciousness of iniquity—the anguish of Abaddona upon the face of Abdiel.

It was some time before she spoke: evidently she had been knitting up her nerves to do so fully, without any display of emotion: for when she began, her voice was unnaturally quiet.

"I will not detain you long, Mr. Revis, nor distress

your kind feelings more than I can help: I had hoped never to be called upon for such a task; but now, though speaking opens an old wound, silence would inflict one deeper still. You must not leave me under that fearful impression I saw in your manner just now." He was about to speak, but a slight movement of her clasped hands seemed to entreat him not to interrupt her. "I am, as you know, an only child: my mother died the day after I was born: and very solitary was my early life. My first recollections are of playing alone by the sea-side, at my father's northern estate, and longing for the friends and companions I read of in my story books. Then, as now, Mrs. Hargrave was my constant attendant: and having no one else to love, I loved her most sincerely. But when I was fifteen, my father became guardian to an orphan cousin, the last of one branch of our family, as I am of the other; several years younger than myself, but not the less capable of understanding and returning affection. He was my darling, my treasure, my idol: like little Charles in figure and complexion,—fearfully like him *now*, as I remember him last, when worn down with long wasting sickness, which first attacked him the second year of his residence with us. Every remedy was tried in vain; he was ordered into Devonshire, and my father being detained in town by the session, I had the charge of him, with the assistance of Mrs. Hargrave, and a nurse in whom we all had confidence. At first the sea-air seemed to revive him; then he faded again: hope and fear succeeded as rapidly as day and night. Oh, how I watched him! how I prayed for him! how every hour I felt him grow dearer and dearer still! His mind, like a hothouse plant, expanded before its time: his thoughts

were holy as those of the angels watching over him: his love, his consideration, his gentleness, were those of the ripened saint: if ever there was a heavenly plant, my precious boy was one."

"And can you not rejoice in his early grace, and its eternal fruition above?" said Lionel, his compassion deeply moved.

"Rejoice?" she repeated, "stay till you hear the end. I nursed him night and day; he was never quite happy without me, and for a time I felt equal to any exertion; but at last my strength began to fail; at least I imagined so: it may have been self-indulgence, inertion, want of endurance, anything but want of love! He who knows all hearts, knows that! However a change came for the better: the physicians gave hope: from hope they spoke confidently: and a blessed moment it was when Edward put his thin arm round my neck, and told me he was glad to live, that we might still be together. That night—oh, how vividly distinct is every moment of that time! it was intensely sultry, and the heat, and the climate, and the exertions I had made, had worn me out: I could do no more; and they all saw it, and persuaded me, as he was so much better, to go to bed, and leave Mrs. Hargrave and Adams to sit up. Before I left my boy, he asked me to give him the medicine he was to take every two hours. I had always done it; I did it again."

Beatrice's head drooped for a moment, and the interested listener perceived, by the working of her muscles, she was forcibly repressing some agonising emotion. He durst not interrupt, and when she looked up again, her features were white and rigid as marble.

"I lay down exhausted, thankful, happy, full of hope,

and with very little fear: never, never more did I sleep such a sleep again. I know not how long it lasted; but I woke amid the crash of a thunder-peal, and Mrs. Hargrave, ghastly and stern, stood beside me. "Get up," she said, "get up, and see what you have done! you have murdered your poor little cousin!"

"Oh, Mr. Revis! there are moments in life that in intensity are more than years: and this was one of them. It was but too true: in my exhausted state, I conclude, I know not how—I had given my darling the wrong draught; and it was acting on his slight frame like poison. I flew to his bed, laid him on my bosom, wept, prayed over him, till reason and consciousness left me, and when I recovered again" my boy was gone!

"A long blank succeeded then; I was at the grave's threshold myself; and how the awful event was concealed from the rest of the world, I never dared enquire. But as soon as I had strength to speak and listen, though not to endure, that friend I had once loved so well, became what she is now, my tyrant. She told me I had caused his death; that if known, I should be publicly brought to justice: that she had been compelled to raise a large sum as a bribe to nurse Adams, which I must repay: and gave me to understand, if I ventured to displease her, the whole truth would be told to my father, who would never forgive me. Worse than all, she taunted me with the fact, that during my illness, a relation, who had long been sinking, had died, leaving me inheritress of a property which should first have been Edward's; and told me, in the event of a trial, this would tell terribly against my cause. Whether true or not, I believed and trembled: and from that bitter hour, my

punishment has been harder than I can bear. The burden of this dreadful secret: the anguish of my irretrievable loss: the galling yoke of this false friend's tyranny: the brand of my brother's blood—have been a cankering agony within my heart for the last six weary years. I have shrunk from the Lord's Table; I have known no peace in prayer; the Word of God brings no comfort, for it is full of threatenings against those who take another's life: the wealth that Edward should have inherited is an oppressing weight of responsibility; I have no rest on earth, I dare not believe I have in heaven! And added to all, made more terrible by the cowardice of my nature, is the knowledge that at any moment my tyrant may fulfil her threat, and all I have humbled myself to avert—the exposure, the questioning, the public shame, it may be the dreadful punishment—may come upon me, as death did upon him! Now you know all; condemn me if you will; but pity me I think you must."

"Pity you!" no words could express the yearning sympathy and compassion of Lionel's voice, as he bent respectfully over her, and took her cold hand in his. "Pity you! weary and heavy laden as you are, oppressed by human cruelty, and smitten by the hand of God! Yours is indeed a sorrow, as heavy as can be borne, without the consciousness of guilt: you are innocent as that sweet child above, and every tribunal would so pronounce you. Be comforted: you do not suffer alone: He who gave you this bitter cup to drink, Himself once drained it to the dregs. He says to you, Be comforted! turn unto Him, and the rest you have so long yearned for in vain, He will assuredly give you."

"You speak like yourself, Mr. Revis," said Beatrice,

in her quiet melancholy tones, "and I thank you for it: but I dare not, I cannot receive the comfort. A curse hangs over me, go where I will: I am followed by the hatred of the poor I long to serve: I have lost the affection of my only parent: I have drawn down a visitation on this house of kindness and good will. Blood for blood is the law of heaven, and as you said yourself, when you little thought how the subject applied, there is no city of refuge now where the slayer is safe from the judgment of man."

"And how could the judgment of men harm you, Miss Eustace? such a narrative as you have told me, would move the coldest heart on earth."

"Do you think," she said, starting up almost wildly, "that I could tell it publicly? that I could argue upon it? that I could live through the agony of an examination? Mr. Revis, I have confided in you, trusted in you, thrown myself on your mercy; you do not mean, out of mistaken kindness, to betray my confidence?"

"You cannot suspect I should;" said Lionel, gently, "I have been the repository of many a secret sorrow, and no one ever yet regretted the trust. May I now offer you a friend's earnest advice?" She looked round breathlessly: her heart foreboded what was coming. "You have a friend, a natural protector," continued Lionel, with earnest kindness, "and yet you have not confided to him what you fear not to reveal to me. Listen not to your false companion's insinuations: depend upon it, she has her reasons for keeping you apart: free yourself from her yoke: tell him all, without reserve, and if she ever should attempt to make your secret public, no friend could advise and shield you like your father."

"My father?" Beatrice turned away, walked to and fro across the room; then stopped short before the Rector, leaning her hand on the table. "Mr. Revis, well read in Scripture as you are, do you remember that awful threatening, "I will curse your blessings?" I have lived to see it fulfilled. There is no name so holy, no image so beautiful, as that of a father's love: to me it is nothing but a breath, a mockery of meaningless words. I have long tried to disbelieve, to explain away, to attribute to my own errors, the stern truth forced upon me, that I am a hated child: I can do so no longer: every year impresses it more strongly, and with every fresh proof, my agonising fear of him grows stronger too."

"Can you not trust your heavenly Father to give you favour in the sight of your earthly one?" said Lionel, "your duty is plain, and in the path of duty, however trying, come blessing, and comfort, and strength."

"May be so," she replied, "but not to me."

"Yes, to you," said Lionel, warmly, "to you, to every one, however sorrowful, however sinful, who will accept the offered salvation. Set your case in the worst possible light; say that your misfortune was indeed caused by your fault; suppose that you were remiss, or indifferent, or negligent of your charge; whatever you will—the truth remains the same: for every sin, for every error the Saviour's blood is ample to atone. How much more when your own heart bears witness, that you would have laid down your life to redeem that of your darling? Listen to me, Miss Eustace, I entreat you: I have a message for you from your heavenly Father. Why is sorrow sent? why are thorns in the daily path whereon an eye of mercy watches, if not to wean us from the love of earthly things?

Situated as you are, with youth, and wealth, and rank, and all the world's richest gifts, it would be dangerous for you to be too happy. The continual presence of a secret grief, the continual thrill of an overhanging fear, are they not sufficient to darken the brightest scene of dissipation, and like the slave in the conqueror's chariot, to whisper that this is not your rest? I do not bid you forget your sorrow; that is impossible: it was not meant that you should: but I would urge you by every argument my warm good will can raise, put that sorrow to its proper use: make it your friend: avail yourself of its assistance in withstanding the dazzling temptations of your position in life: wake to the sense of your duties; take up your allotted work: let the time past suffice you to have mourned over that which is irrevocable, and to have wasted the prime of your energies in bondage of body and mind. Wake to your Saviour's voice, and walk in His glorious liberty, and the face that has been veiled in mercy to you on earth, will smile on the welcome that waits for you above!"

Lionel paused, his heart was full, and his eyes glistening with heartfelt earnestness; Miss Eustace remained leaning on the table, listening almost breathlessly, as to a prophet's voice: but when he ceased, she drew a long deep sigh. "Thoughts and hopes like these have visited me before: I have welcomed, rejoiced in them as the promise of brighter days: but one frown, one taunt, one angry word throws me back, and leaves me darker than before."

"And always will," said the Rector, "while you submit to the misery of a secret. Free yourself from that, and be at rest."

"Anything but confession! anything but my father's

anger! you know not what you require of me," said Beatrice, wringing her hands, "set me some secret penance, some heavy task, some wearisome self-denial, and I shall have hope: but not this, for it were easier to die!" She moved to the door, passed him as he stood, disappointed and sorrowful, and murmured as she went, "Too late, too late! years ago it might have been done; it is too late now!" Lionel tried to detain her; to make her listen yet once more, but in vain: she only clasped her hands upon her brow, and went on, and his last view of her, as she passed slowly into the garden, drooping, heart-stricken, and weary, haunted his thoughts for many a day, as with an echo of that bitter wail, "Too late...too late!"

It was many weeks before they met again, but from that hour she was always mentioned in his prayers.

Little Charles got better from that day: as some wise heads predicted he would, now that Mr. Revis had interfered in his nursing: the cloud that had gathered in such lowering masses over the house, dispersed beneath the sunshine of mercy, and dissolved in bright tears of joy: and when thanks were returned in church for his restoration, it was all Lionel could do to read the words, or Lady Seymour to hear them.



CHAPTER VIII.

THE summer passed, and faded into autumn: the autumn chilled into winter: Christmas came and went: and New-year misletoe gave place to February buds: the silent march of weeks, that goes on incessantly whether we weep or rejoice, left its traces behind on the good parish of Eastbury. Change, change, change, is the key-note of time: circles break up; hearts are divided; the feelings take hues as varied as the leaves; and man is never left without a strong reminder that he has no abiding city here. And forcibly did this strike the mind of Julia Seymour, as she sat at her writing-table one day at the commencement of February, with her eyes thoughtfully fixed on a letter that morning received. Change and disappointment had attended her brightest schemes: at first, after Charlie's recovery, and Miss Eustace's return to the Hall, their intercourse had been daily, and more and more affectionate: Mrs Hargrave was courteous, Lord Eustace showed her marked attention, and all had been bright and smooth, till one day, when driven into the horns of a dilemma by the peer's pointed questions touching his daughter, she had frankly told him her principal malady was being harshly treated. This had been received well at the time, but the next

thing Julia heard was, that they were going to the sea: one hurried interview with Miss Eustace was all she was permitted to have; and from that day she had seen her no more. The blank her absence caused was not to be filled up: Harry was gone back to Harrow: Jane Barnard had grown colder in manner. Miss Durant was too silly to be endured: and Miss Lloyd, though the best creature in the world, was not so intellectual as she might be: worst of all, (though Julia complained of this to nobody,) Mr. Revis, from the time of Miss Eustace's departure, almost entirely withdrew from the Lodge. No longer would he pay his cheering morning or evening visits, or send Joseph Mayflower with books, or May with messages, or form plans for the children, or give advice to herself, or any of those pleasant ways of intercourse in which he had seemed to delight as much as she did. When they met, his frank kind manner had an appearance of restraint: he seldom addressed her personally, and never as he did before: sometimes she would fancy he was watching her privately; but whenever her eye turned on his, the look was immediately withdrawn. Signs of alteration were visible also in his general habits and his person. His face looked thinner, his brow more thoughtful, his eye more deeply bright: report said, (though May preserved a discreet silence), that he was up half the night writing at his Commentary, that he had taken to fasting, that he was in a decline, that he had quarrelled with his uncles, that he was longing for the sports of the North, and half a dozen things besides. Whatever it was, the change was very plain; and when it was detected that his black coat was losing its gloss, and no new one thought of: that he had left off drinking wine, and scarcely allowed

himself fires, the neighbourhood began to grow uneasy. Julia said less than any one, but felt the most: it was not till he had withdrawn himself, that she discovered how fascinating he was; nor till she had to pursue her duties without his approving smile, that she was quite aware of the feebleness of her own motives. Heavy, cold, and grey looked the external world now: one bright vision removed: the other so changed in hue: the dull prose of life stripped of its beauty: the gay flowers turned to a sere and withered leaf. Poor Julia! at seventeen this was a severe trial to bear, and one in which she could seek no sympathy for fear of being laughed at: she had a sufficiently keen sense of the ridiculous to keep her from becoming a victim to sentiment: but it was very little comfort to know she was weak and silly, and to reflect that perhaps Mr. Revis had found it out. One comfort however she had, and this never failed her--the steady friendship of her grand-mamma: who, without ever talking about her troubles, thoroughly understood them, and by her kind advice, encouraging looks, and seasonable warnings, stimulated her resolutions, and helped her to persevere in duty. It was dull work at first; but it brought its own reward: after a long arduous morning of teaching and visiting, with all its discouragements of stupidity and prejudice, and the sight of misery she could not relieve, there was a peculiar sweetness in the repose of her home, in the quiet of her own room, in her favourite books, in her thoughts of the world to come. Her imagination being sealed for the time, her right feelings and good sense gained strength: she learned to do good for the sake of her heavenly Father: not merely to please a fellow-being. Many a struggle did she endure, and heavy at times was her heart, but she came bravely through, and never flinched, during

that most trying winter. A trying one it was to rich and poor: the cold was intense, and from a variety of circumstances, the parish greatly distressed. Complaints of the dearness of food, and the slackness of work, were heard early in the season: at Christmas they were louder still, and the hands of the charitable were as full as they could manage. Sir John, a martyr to the long frost, exerted himself under Lionel's urging hand, to ameliorate the condition of the poor: all the families in the neighbourhood came forward to help: Miss Eustace remitted money regularly to Julia, to be secretly applied to the use of the people, who loaded her name with abuse: but his Lordship and Mr. Hargrave were a dead weight round the necks of their neighbours. They were always doing just the contrary to what was wished; thwarting all good designs, and maddening the people by ill-timed severity: Mr. Revis had enough to do to keep peace in his own village; and among the scattered nests of Chartism in the neighbourhood, two or three attempts at an outbreak were only repressed by a timely display of force. Mr. Lawrence, a sensible, intelligent man, with sound constitutional views, won his election, being supported by all the lovers of tranquillity, who held the principal votes. Mr. Richard Durant, after riding all over the county, explaining to the people that he was the champion destined to restore their ravished liberties, to establish equality, overthrow landlordism, strip the Church, clear away the taxes, and all other miracles of Utopian Chartism, found himself left with his pamphlet, and his Sunday essays, and his admiring sister, to find consolation as he might without an M.P. to his name. But the seeds of mischief he had so profusely scattered took root far and wide: the meetings, and canvassings, and placardings, had been too good an

opportunity for the malcontents to let slip, and the name of Durant answering as well as any other for a watchword, was made use of accordingly.

Mrs. Barnard had carried her point at last, and with her whole family, had been taking a tolerably long holiday. They had in fact been away from the middle of December, till even Mr. Revis's good nature and patience had begun to fail: and he had been obliged, much against his will, to inform his curate, that there was really more work to be done than he could go on with alone. In obedience to this hint, they returned, and while Julia was still sitting meditating, as we have described her, she was surprised by the entrance of Jane, and Miss Letty Bellamy. Whatever coolness had lurked in Miss Barnard's feelings towards her friend, on the subject of Lady Clara Vere de Vere, absence had made the heart grow fonder, and their meeting was affectionate and warm: even Letty received a cordial greeting, for it had not escaped Julia's notice, that, though her intellectual faculties were still in abeyance, her disposition had in some respects improved. They were both pressed to stay luncheon, to which, as they had been previously desired to do, they willingly agreed: and while Jane sitting as close to her friend as she could, feasted her eyes with looking at her in silence, Letty began to chatter according to custom. "Well, Miss Seymour, here we are again, settled down to be dull and steady, for the next year, I suppose. We have had a gay Christmas: plenty of parties, and all that: I grew rather tired of them at last: it is stupid work meeting people day after day, talking silly things, and trying to be agreeable. Hester was quite miserable at leaving, but then there might be a reason for that, you know," looking very

sagacious, "and it is high time, for she was out an age before me. She is very proud of it all, though: without having much to be proud of: I am sure *I* would'nt have him if he was a Duke."

"Is it gone as far as that?" asked Julia, "what an interesting piece of news! and we are sadly in want of romantic incidents just now in Eastbury. Tell me who, where, and what he is; that I may have my story perfect when asked."

"Oh, but it is a secret at present: Hester would be mad with me if she knew; I am sure I don't want to talk about it, I was quite sick of it all at S - - -. I don't think I shall ever care to go to that place again; our cousins the John Bellamy's were there, and we had balls, and parties, and all that sort of thing, but I got tired at last. We made a new acquaintance there, who was the greatest bore in the world: one day, looking over the list in the library, mamma pounced on the name of Miss Grantley; you would have thought she had found a Pitt diamond, at last: away she went to cousin John, and then they walked, and they drove, and they hunted, and they fretted, till we were all nearly wild, were we not, Jane?"

"I vas not," said Jane, who had taken up a piece of work in Julia's bag, and was quietly going on with it.

"No, I forgot: you were seldom at home: do you know, Miss Seymour, Jane made friends with so many queer people: and used to walk about with a great bag in the poor streets, just as she does here: and it is as well she did, for she found Miss Grantley that way."

"Which speaks well both for Miss Grantley and Jane," observed Julia: "by the bye, is she any relation to Gotham's late master, the doctor?"

"His sister," said Jane, smiling, "you may be sure I tried to find out.

"Well," continued Miss Letty, "sister or not, she was found at last, and then, such a piece of work as there was, to be sure! Such inviting her, and feasting her, and tea, and sweet cakes, and flattery, and flummery, as if she had been dear Miss Eustace herself."

"Who never could bear flattery and flummery in her life," put in Julia, quickly: Jane gave a dry cough; and Miss Letty continued, "Well, there we were, tacked to this old lady to play draughts and cribbage and stupid old games that sent one to sleep: and she used to be shut up in the morning with John and mamma, and they used to go to her lodgings, and look over papers, and there were whisperings, and arranging, and all sorts of mysteries: such a worry: I wished her a hundred miles off. But now comes the oddest part: who should come down to S - - - all of a sudden but my Lord Eustace himself? It looked so strange to see him there, all alone: no Beatrice with him, which was a great pity, wasn't it, Jane?" Jane made no answer. "Well, and so we met him, papa, mamma, and I, and Hetty, and Gustavus: (there, I have let out his name after all, but you must not tell Hetty); and you may be sure we all made him our best bows and curtseys, expecting a little civility from a neighbour; but the gentleman was much too grand to remember us, and passed without so much as a nod."

"Very uncivil," said Julia, "Miss Eustace would have behaved very differently."

"I am sure she would: I said so at the time, didn't I, Jane? and you didn't seem to agree with me. Well, that very same afternoon, we were walking on the beach, Miss

Grantley and all, and my Lord came up again. And how he did start and stare, and how his face changed! he remembered us all directly, bowed, and shook hands, and was as friendly and cordial as possible, and *so* attentive to Miss Grantley, poor old lady, who looked quite flustered and nervous at seeing him: papa introduced cousin John Bellamy, and they had a long talk together, and Lord Eustace invited them to dinner at the hotel, and all the time he staid you have no idea how attentive he was. Wasn't it odd?"

"Julia," said Jane Barnard, when her sister was engaged with Lady Seymour, who amused herself with extracting all the particulars that served best to illustrate the characters of the family; and the two friends had escaped to a private corner. "Julia, dear, I am very unhappy, and I want you to advise and comfort me." Julia responded with sincere good-will. "Letty does not know half she talks about," continued Jane, "nor is she aware of half the vexations of our unfortunate holiday: it has been none to me. You have no idea of the expense it has been: what with carriages, and new dresses, and receiving people at home: and mamma's cousins have rather gay notions, and persuaded my sisters: and in short, how we shall all get on now, I do not know, unless one of two things happen, either of which would give me great pain."

"You look as if you had been vexed," said Julia, affectionately, "tell me if I can help you."

"You cannot help me, no: but it is a comfort to tell you things: I have no one else: and you are always so kind. One plan is, that Mr. Revis should raise Papa's salary, and the other that Lord Eustace should give him the living of Dylam: Mr. Sharpe is sinking every day."

"I do not think the former likely," said Julia, "why should you object to Mr. Barnard's preferment?"

Jane laid her face on her shoulder. "Once— I was so proud of him then—I should have been most thankful for it: *now*, oh! dear Julia! I never can keep anything from you: you will not repeat what I say: but he is not fit for a large neglected parish: he is not indeed: it is an awful responsibility; he could never get through the duties, and I would rather work my fingers to the bone to support him than have the misery of seeing him undertake what he could not conscientiously fulfil."

"Well, dear Jane, but what can I do?"

"You can do this," said Jane, firmly, "if any attempt is made to persuade you to use your interest, or your father's to get him this living, you can, for my sake, for the sake of the poor neglected souls in Dylam, *refuse*."

"Oh Jane!"

"Refuse," continued Jane, "to make him miserable for life, and break my heart, with a load of duties that will only burden our consciences: if you love me, as I think you do, though not so much as you do Miss Eustace—" Jane stopped, for Julia's countenance had changed. "I do not mean that: I do not know what I mean: but you will promise me, will you not?"

Julia promised; not unwillingly; for she had heard enough that winter to satisfy her on the subject of Mr. Barnard, and her only wonder was that Lionel Revis could feel contented with him.

Contented? Lionel was just the reverse: but he could not make up his mind to dismiss the father of a family, with so little to depend upon for subsistence. His indolence and neglect fell heavily on the Rector's shoulders,

and Mr. Lloyd one evening seeing Julia about to copy Retzsch's outline of Pegasus in harness, pointed to the group where the heaven-born steed is breaking down beneath the weight of his dull earthly colleague, and called them Revis and Barnard. It had not come to that point hitherto: yet Lionel Revis had a hard struggle that winter, and even his energetic spirit was at times sorely oppressed.

On one of those bright mornings at the beginning of the autumn, to which Julia looked back with such yearning regret, the Rector received a budget of letters, whose perusal beguiled his lonely breakfast hour: beginning with the most interesting and leaving to the last one whose hand writing was unknown. The following specimens will illustrate the variety of his communications.

The first was from the Bishop: we can only venture on an extract: the rest being too learned for transcribing.

"Take care, my dear nephew, not to fall into extremes: avoid alike a weak compromise on one hand, and a dogmatical vehemence on the other. Conciliate, if possible: lead, rather than drive: be patient; it is the faculty you are most deficient in: I doubt not your zeal and energy. I only fear your suffering the difficulties of your task to blind your discretion. Give heed to *meditation*, not only on the truths you have to teach, but on your own conduct and motives in teaching. I know your position is arduous, but God has given you powers, and may He bless you in the use thereof! I enclose you a cheque to procure yourself books for the better advancing of your Commentary. It is all I am able to give at present: for the income of the see is not more than adequate to its claims: I know my natural disposition to consult my own gratifi-

cation too well not to tremble at times lest I also be tempted."

"My good, kind, modest uncle!" said Lionel, as he laid down the letter, "who never spent upon yourself one-fifth of your income; whose temptations have principally been in the way of literature; whose house is the shelter of all who want a home! Never will I be the one to encroach on your kind nature. Now for my old master, Dr. Hooper. What can he want? And how he would have rapped my knuckles, if I had ever brought up my verses written in half so incomprehensible a hieroglyphic!"

"My dear Son.—They tell me you are grown a popular preacher. I am sorry for it. Truth is never popular: honesty is never popular: to please people you must tell them lies. I hope to hear your parish is pelting you. Rub the sugar off your lips, and give them a little of good old Captain Execution, with the black flag and hot thunderbolts. These times require strong measures. I shall keep a bed for you this Christmas, if you want a little advice. My old servant Cobb (you remember Cobb) longs to see you. He can scarcely conceive of such a lusus naturæ as Prince Prettyman in whiskers.

"Your obedient Servant,

"Nathaniel Hooper."

"My dear Boy.—Soon after this you will receive per rail, a hamper of game; some as fine birds as ever were bagged: not a Frenchman among them: those packed together were shot in your favourite field behind the hill: take a good tithe yourself; you parsons

like good things, though too nice to take the trouble of getting them: and if you have any fair lady to whom you owe a little homage, hand her over the rest. Game is rather shy this season: and my hand is not so true as it was twenty years ago: nor even as when I first held the gun over your shoulder, and taught you to pull the trigger without wincing. Don't suppose because I have sent you some partridges, that I forgive you, you undutiful dog: I never shall, and it is only because I can't help it that I subscribe myself your affectionate uncle,

GEOFFREY REVIS.

"Remember me to Sir John Seymour: tell him whenever he will beat us up, I will give him such a day's shooting as you Southerns know nothing about. I hope Ranger turns out as good a nag as he promised to be."

Lionel shook his head with a smile and a sigh, and kissed his uncle's handwriting.

"DEAR REVIS.—Have you read the article in the —Review on the controversy between D. and T. It is written by Firefume of our year. Send us your opinion on his style: we are all divided upon it; he is rather too addicted to an imitation of Carlyle; at least I am inclined to think so, &c. &c.

SIR.—We the undersigned members of the Committee for the Society of — request the favour of your attendance at a meeting about to be held for the benefit of the same, &c. &c.

There were several of this kind: Lionel read and threw

them aside, and took up the last of the collection with a carelessness that changed into deep concern as he began the perusal.

London, Sept, . .

"Rev. Sir.—In addressing you, I feel I am addressing a man of honourable and upright feelings, and as such I appeal to you. It is now fifteen years ago, since I lent to your father, the late Algernon Revis, Esq. the sum of £2000: why I did so, I need scarcely explain: he was a man who could command any thing and any body; and he gave me his bond for punctual repayment: You need not be informed how the money was spent: I never pressed him, for I was then well off: it never was repaid. Since then, Rev. Sir, I have fallen into difficulties, and am myself a debtor for more than that amount. My principal creditor is Richard Durant, Esq. of Ouseley: and he has taken some severe measures against me; I have a family to support, and am in the greatest distress. If you are, sir, the man report speaks you, you will consider my case, and not drive me to the painful expedient of laying the whole affair before counsel: I do not threaten: I only state facts, relying on your generosity as well as your justice.

"Your obedient Servant,

"Thos. Oswald."

Lionel read this letter three times over; and a cold thrill ran through his veins. His father's sin! it was being visited now upon him. Justice! yes, if the writer's case was true, justice must be done him, though he starved to do it: but how? He walked up and down the room in violent excitement. Two thousand pounds! where

could he raise such a sum? Not from his uncles; their liberality had been so great already: his income was his only resource: it was seven hundred a year: a hundred and fifty went to Mr. Barnard: if he gave up £300 a year to Oswald, in less than seven years the whole debt would be paid. Perhaps, if the Commentary sold well, —and he gave an anxious glance at the beloved pile of MS.—it might even be accomplished sooner. But then came the sickening conviction that one bright dream, only just beginning to assume form and distinctness, must be swept away; perhaps for ever. Shackled with such a load as this, how could he dare to win a heart that he had no means of making his own? His resolution was taken at once: he went no more as he had done to the house of Sir John Seymour.

No wonder a change was discernible in his habits, and in his dress: he grudged himself every meal, every penny: the poor felt no diminution of his kindness; but they little knew how ill he could spare what he gave: his daily self-denial was known only to his faithful May, from whom he could have no secrets. May read the letter: helped him to calculate, and entered heart and hand into his endeavours: only stipulating that everything might be left to her, and that he would make no presents, except to the real poor. "If you wish to give to them, sir, you must deny yourself the pleasure of serving the ladies, you see." He did see it, and from that day the kitchen garden was closed against all foragers; nor had the Rector reason for a single moment to repent his confidence. May and Joseph, (for they at once dismissed the cook,) managed his house in the most wonderful manner; how they lived themselves, nobody knew: but his establish-

ment expenses would even have astounded Mrs. Barnard.

So passed that heavy winter, heavy indeed to him! How much he went through; how he braved all weathers in visiting the sick and the discontented; how he robbed himself of rest to labour with his pen, in the hope of earlier deliverance; how he wrestled with the rebellious spirit within, tempting him to become resentful against him whose revenge he traced in this business; how he fought with the sickening regret that Julia Seymour's image would call up; though all external things had become joyless and dull—no one knew but himself. His gallant spirit struggled through all: bore the remarks, the enquiries, the sarcasms of his neighbours: and even the pointedly marked commiseration of Richard Durant: and when his heart felt wearied, as it could not but do at times, he had only to lift his eyes to the firmament above, and find refreshment in the remembrance that all would be made up there.

About the middle of February, the long frost broke up, and Lionel gladly availed himself of the opportunity of using the services of Ranger in his toilsome rounds. It was some time since he had visited the Dennets, and he was not without a latent curiosity as to how that rustic romance might be prospering. He rode across the country at a brisk pace, composing his Sunday evening lecture on the coming of spring: and paying little heed where he was going, till startled by finding himself on the edge of a pretty wide leap. Not feeling disposed to distinguish himself unnecessarily, he was looking round for an easier mode of egress from the field he was in, when the echo of angry voices caught his attention, and on the

broken ground opposite, he perceived two men in violent dispute. Before he could decide what to do, one struck the other with a whip, and the latter instantly rushing upon him like a tiger, Lionel dreaded what mischief might follow. He set Ranger straight at the gap: the petted horse refused it: his master turned him round, and tried again, with the same result. "This will not do," said Lionel, "Ranger, if you beat me, I shall lose all confidence in myself." He put the horse to its full speed, and charged the leap at a gallop, cleared it safely, and was upon the quarrellers in an instant. Their surprise at his feat distracted their thoughts from each other, and Lionel at once recognised in the one Durant's favourite groom, Tomkins, and in the other, Philip Lee.

Neither seemed much pleased at the encounter: they drew back on either side, and saluted him respectfully; but the face of Tomkins was sullen, and Philip's red with passion; and the Rector's enquiry met at first with no reply. The next minute, however, they began to explain simultaneously: Tomkins grumbling out that he had as good a right to admire a pretty girl as another, and Philip loudly declaring he had no business to think of or look at Ellen Dennet. Lionel had some difficulty in keeping them from coming to blows again, and not a little in making out how the quarrel began. It appeared at last, that Tomkins had been courting Ellen Dennet, and had been favoured by her father and mother, though never once, protested Philip, by herself: and he had dared to talk of her as his promised wife; and to go so far as to say his master would set him up in business as soon as he was ready to be married. Philip had dared him to prove his words, and the quarrel had risen high immediately: "and

if he dares speak of Ellen Dennet, in any way, as belonging to such as he, it will not be over in a hurry," added Philip, shaking his fist at his rival, who laughed contemptuously, and observed that pretty Ellen knew which side her bread was buttered, and would rather have one who could keep her, than a fellow who had not one shilling to rub against another. Tomkins, however, changed his tone when the Rector began to remonstrate with them, and drily remarking, of course if Mr. Revis took Lee's part, he had no more to say, touched his hat, and walked off. In a few minutes he returned, with a slight hesitation in his manner. "I beg your pardon, sir, for the liberty, if it is a liberty; but I think I heard you had a mind to part with your horse."

"I do not know where you could have heard it," said Lionel, "for I have no idea of so doing."

"Oh! then I beg your pardon, Sir: I am sure: I only meant that I am in the habit of dealing in horses for gentlemen, and I should be happy to treat with your reverence about such an animal as that."

"Thank you," said Lionel, mollified by the look of admiration of his favourite: "but Ranger suits me too well to be willingly parted with."

Tomkins had no more to say, and Philip was left to unburden his mind to his pastor, which he was not slow in doing. He was very unhappy; quite miserable; he didn't know or care what would become of him: Tomkins was a rogue, and a false friend: he had pretended to be his friend some time, when he came round with his master, canvassing for votes, and had lent him tracts to read, not a bit like Mr. Revis's and Miss Barnard's, but all politics, and such like: and had taken him to some of the meet-

ings, and tried hard to make him like one of themselves: "and what that is," added Philip, "I can't well make out: they talk about liberty and being equal, and growing wiser and cleverer, and being better off than ever we were in our lives: and yet, if one differs from them ever so little, or puts in a word for what one has been in the way of believing all one's life, then it is, traitor, and spy, and government man, and turn him out; and half murder one, they do, among them. And as to the Sundays: oh, Mr. Revis, Sir! it was a good day for me and many of us when you stopped the Sunday frolics, and set up that lecture of yours. What I hear there, often comes into my head when they are all persuading me to join these clubs and parties, and I've kept out of them pretty well: though not as clear as I should. Well, and then, because Mr. Durant talked soft like to Nelly's father and mother, and praised up Tomkins, and promised great things if he married her, the old people fancy it will be the making of her, and that she'll be noticed by the great folks at Ouseley, and be rich, and I don't know what. And so they are at her morn and night, and she frets dreadful, and yet we've done as you bid us, and not done nothing underhand, but just kept all on, as patiently as we could: and patience won't last for ever. I know what it will be, sir, I shall either turn Chartist, or I must go out to Australia, as others have done. Work is slack, and I'm poor, and a poor man, they say, shall never have Nelly; and if I can't have her, I can't stay here."

"Well, Lee, this is bad hearing," said Mr. Revis, as he moved slowly on, with Philip walking by his side, "but I am not inclined to think the case hopeless, if you will hold patiently on a little while longer. Keep clear of dan-

gerous company: have nothing to do with the Chartists: meddle not with them that are given to change, but stick to your duty steadily, and trust in God. I will see what can be done."

At the usual hour, the Rector came home to his dinner, and as usual, May had everything ready, and spread as invitingly as she could devise. But to her disappointment, her master had no appetite: he hardly spoke: and in a few minutes pushed his plate away, and signed that he had done. As there were no means of forcing a mutton chop down his throat against his will, May was compelled to reluctant resignation: but the indignant manner in which she removed her slighted provisions, did not escape his eye. "Let Mrs. Plowden have that, Marian: it is so nicely dressed, it will do her good."

"Very well, sir; she shall have it: only I wish you would remember to take care of yourself as well as other people."

"Time enough for that," said Lionel, with a sigh, and he sat down and worked at his Commentary till he was fairly tired: then he had two funerals by way of rest, and on his return, Tomkins was waiting for him. They were alone in the stable for a quarter of an hour, when the groom departed, evidently well pleased. Lionel watched him out of sight, and then called for Joseph, and Joseph appeared, and May peeped out of the kitchen. "Joseph, you have a great deal to do."

"Hey, sir! if I don't mind, you needn't."

"You will have less in future, Joseph."

"What do you mean, sir? you're not agoing to turn me away?" and Joseph's long-face grew three good inches longer.

"Not till you wish to go, but you will have one less to wait upon to-morrow."

Joseph looked steadily in his master's face, and read the truth at once. "You've *sold* him, sir?" Lionel could only nod his assent, and Mayflower rushed into the stable.

Yes, Ranger was sold; beautiful, gallant Ranger! his master's favourite so long, but never loved so fondly as now. And we hope our Rector may be pardoned, if in making this sacrifice to the happiness of others, he could not restrain the feeling of intense regret, that brought the moisture into his eyes whenever he looked at the stable door. His heart was not the less resolute for being heavy: and the thought of that coming happiness to others, which he had no prospect of sharing, was in itself a recompense. Tomkins came in due course, and fetched his purchase away, little dreaming that he had thus thrown down the only remaining obstacle, between the union of Ellen Dennet with Philip Lee. And little guessed that happy pair, when Lionel presented Philip with fifty pounds to match Ellen's fifty, and told him the old people had promised, if he could show that sum he should have their girl, let Mr. Durant say what he might: little guessed they, when they saw the benevolent sympathy that beamed in his face, how dearly he had bought their joy. They knew not half the trouble he had had with the prejudices of old Thomas and Mrs. Lee, still less what a grievous thing it was to his spirit to part with his favourite to a servant of Richard Durant: too full of their own happiness to think of anything else, they blessed his goodness, and praised his liberality, and only wondered that he, who had so tender a heart for others' love, should not be looking about to win some for himself.

The frost had broken up, and the sportsmen were set free; and Sir John and many others forgot their own troubles and those of their poor neighbours, in the more important business of the hunting field. Durant being a reckless rider, constantly found himself with a disabled steed, whereby his horse-dealing squire Tomkins derived much profit. Against such an emergency he reserved Ranger, and only produced him when his young master was in such extremity for a hunter he would give him just what he asked. Durant, as soon as he knew it was the Rector's horse, was wild to make it his own: and his own it became, as Lionel had foreseen; and on the next hunting-day was ridden, but fate frowned unpropitious; foxes were provokingly absent without leave; and the gallant field, after much expenditure of time and patience, were fain to disperse in no brilliant humour. Durant's course took him through the hamlet where Ellen and Philip lived, and the idea struck him of stopping at Dennet's cottage, and putting in a word for Tomkins. "O lor, Mr. Durant! all that's over now," was the reply of the mother, "Mr. Revis came and said so much, and didn't seem to think, begging your honour's pardon, that he would make Ellen happy, and my husband had said if Phil Lee could show fifty pounds against the fifty left to Ellen by her sailor uncle, he wouldn't forbid their marrying, and so Mr. Revis, God bless him, gave Phil the money, and they are to be married very soon, your honour."

Mr. Durant was violently enraged: as he always was when his will was thwarted: he argued and reproached in no measured terms, taunting the woman with her mean spirit in stooping to be governed by a parson, and of joining the family that had always been her enemy.

"Well, really, sir, said Mrs. Dennet, "we stood out as

long as we could, didn't we, Thomas lad? and we were as full of evil tempers towards the Lees as you could wish: but Mr. Revis has such a way with him, sir: you've no idea how difficult it is to stand out; and somehow, since it has all been made up, I feel happier like, and Ellen looks another creature, and so, you see—"

"I see, he said," turning abruptly away; then suddenly coming back to say, in a loud sarcastic tone, "the next time you see Mr. Revis, tell him, while he has so much money to give away, he had better be paying up his father's gambling debts!"

Lionel came out of Lee's house just in time to hear this speech, and to see the speaker on Ranger's back. He made no comment, but sternly and silently stood looking on as his enemy passed; his clenched hand pressing his chest, as if to keep down the wrath within. But Durant was too excited to pass in peace; he soon came back to compliment the Rector on his skill in match-making. Lionel said nothing: he was resolute in keeping his temper. Ranger knowing his master, stretched out his sleek head to be caressed; Durant pulled him sharply in; the animal grew restive; the rider angry: two such hot spirits were not long in coming to open war; Ranger reared and pranced; Durant lashed and spurred, and the next minute would have been flung from his saddle, had not Mr. Revis, better acquainted with his favourite's propensities, sprung forwards and seized the rein. Ranger obeyed the familiar hand and voice, and Mr. Durant recovered his stirrup, though not his temper. "He needs no violence," said Lionel, stroking Ranger's neck, already covered with foam, "it only irritates him: treat him gently, and he will carry you anywhere."

"I thank you," said Durant, gathering up the reins, and

muttering between his teeth, "if coaxing and wheedling is *your* method of managing, it is not mine." He wheeled his horse, and leaping into the next field, began to gallop round and round, using whip and spur without mercy. "I say," said old Thomas to his wife, "beant that Mr. Revis's horse the squire is on?" Mrs. Dennet didn't know, but Ellen did, and she looked quickly round at Philip, who had just reached their door. "Oh, Philip! why did Mr. Revis sell his favourite horse?" The same thought flashed across both their minds at the same moment. "Bless him!" said Philip, "it must have been for us: and to think of his standing there to see it used like that! Oh, Ellen! he talked about forgiving, and forbearing, and loving one another in spite of injuries; will he ever forgive Mr. Durant what he is doing now?"

"If he does," said old Dennet, who had hobbled to the door to see what was going on, "if he *does*, Phil, I shall have better faith in what he preaches so often than I have ever had yet."

A cry from the road made them all start: and on looking towards the spot where the Rector had just been standing, with folded arms and compressed lips, watching the punishment of his favourite, he was no longer there. The figure of Durant too had disappeared. Philip rushed out, and several heads were simultaneously thrust from doors and windows. "He's down! he's off! he's thrown! that way! that way!"

Philip caught a sight of the Rector flying across the field, and followed as fast as he could: before he reached the spot, Lionel had raised the stunned and bruised form of his old schoolfellow from the stone hollow where he had fallen: and without giving more than a hurried glance at

Ranger, had begun to carry him towards the cottages. Several men ran up to help, and between them Mr. Durant was safely deposited in Dennet's room, where means were immediately used for his recovery: all looked to the Rector for orders, and by his desire, one of the men ran for a doctor, and another for a conveyance; and when Lionel had satisfied himself that no serious injury had been sustained, he went with sinking heart to enquire after the horse. Philip met him half way, and with tears in his eyes, laid his hand affectionately on his arm. "Now, don't ye go there, Mr. Revis, sir: pray, pray don't: it will only shock and grieve you, and it's just over by this time!"

Lionel turned silently from him, and covered his face with his hands.

Alas, poor Ranger!





CHAPTER IX.

IT was about a week after the incidents just recorded, that Philip Lee, having business very dear to his heart in Myrton, had been transacting it with much satisfaction, and was turning homewards to spend the evening with Ellen, and tell her how he had arranged about the small shop they were going to open, when his progress was arrested by a crowd collected round the door of the gaol. Seeing two or three faces he knew, he asked what was the news. His acquaintance informed him, with a look of surprise at his ignorance, that it was one of the ringleaders in the late riot at Dylam, being "mewed up" for his pains. "He's an Eastbury man, too; so you ought to know him—Simpson." Philip was shocked, for he had known Simpson well; and pressing forward to the gates, he petitioned to be admitted to the prisoner's cell. This was at first flatly denied: Mr. Hargrave, who appeared very busy in the matter, spoke to him harshly, and bade him go about his business: but this turned out in Philip's favour: for a gentleman, who disliked Lord Eustace and his agent, immediately interposed, and obtained him admission. Simpson was much altered, and appeared in great pain, with a blow on the shoulder: he would hardly speak to his old

acquaintance at first; but Philip's kind enquiries after his wife and children softened his exasperated feelings. "Ah, Lee! there's where it hurts me most: they're all in bad hands: mad that I was to meddle in matters like these, and wicked as they were as drove me to it! However, they'll have their reward; that's one comfort."

"Thank God and Mr. Revis," said Philip, "I have kept clear of these riots as yet, and I've been pretty well-tempted too. He persuaded me to stick to my church, and read my Bible, and all his advice has turned out sound; and now, through his goodness, I'm going to be married to Ellen Dennet: and but for him, I might have been keeping you company now."

"He gave me the same advice, but I was fool enough not to listen. Oh, Lee! I know you're a good fellow: don't stay here now, for it is hardly safe to walk late across the moor; but just go round by Dylam and see my wife, and help her if you can. She will be breaking her heart for me, and I don't deserve it: mind you treat your Ellen well: there's no friend like a wife all the world over."

Philip promised; he knew Ellen would welcome him all the more fondly for doing a kind action, even if he was detained later in consequence; and having left his unhappy friend what money he could spare, and promised unasked, to send Mr. Revis to comfort him, was not sorry to find himself outside the gloomy walls. Mr. Hargrave was just getting into his gig, and with some importance, observing to two of his friends who stood on the pavement, "he was engaged to dine at the Hall." "Lucky fellow that!" observed one, watching him down the street, "I did not know my Lord was come home."

"No more he is," said the other, "I enquired there to-day; but Miss Eustace was expected every hour."

"Luckier still, that's all."

Philip hurried on, anxious to get through his promised duty as speedily as possible, and having provided himself with some comforts for Simpson's family, turned manfully away from the Eastbury road, and took that to the neighbouring parish of Dylam.

It was a dreary walk on that sharp raw afternoon, through lanes choked with mud, and over parts of the moor where the wind swept in sudden gusts, enough to chill even the blood of youth and hope. Philip trudged on, whistling and thinking of Ellen, and wondering what would have been his lot if he had lived at Dylam instead of Eastbury: for the difference between the two parishes was too striking to be overlooked. There were no signs of a pastor's care, the church was dilapidated, the churchyard full of sheep, luxuriating in the long rank grass; the houses, many of them in ruins; dark traces visible where burnt ricks had stood; gaps in the fences where rough hands had plundered; and, worst of all, as young Lee turned down the lane whither he had been directed, there were tokens, too plain to be mistaken, of a scene of strife and blood. And all this was Lord Eustace's property: and here were rents exacted, and provocations inflicted, and as much thankfulness and punctuality looked for, as if their landlord had been resident among them, watching their fortunes, and sympathising in all their distress. "No wonder," thought Philip, "the people don't love him: but they would do better if Mr. Revis was but here." The church bell began to toll: Philip had no fancy for the sound, and he hastened on to a cluster of

cottages, where he was told he should find Mrs. Simpson.

Miserable enough did he find her: huddled up over a handful of fire with her children clinging round her: and very glad was she to see an Eastbury face. She reproached herself for her folly in rejecting the offers of Miss Seymour and Miss Barnard, who had really been very kind, and tried to persuade her to remain in the village, where they would have helped her to get a living by a mangle or such like; but pride and anger had prevailed, and her husband being anxious to move among his Dylam friends, here they had come, and dreadfully they had suffered all the winter. "Ah, Mr. Lee!" she added, as if to comfort herself even while owning her obstinacy, "if that stony-hearted young lady, Miss Eustace, would but have spoken up for us! but she wouldn't, and it lies at her door that we are what we are!"

"Now, do you know," said Philip, "I am not at all inclined to agree with you there; I know it is a fashion among you to lay the blame on Miss Eustace: but Ellen Dennet, (you remember her, Mrs. Simpson? she's no bad judge) she had work to do for her while she was at the Lodge, and she said, a kinder or civiller spoken young lady couldn't be: Ellen says it is a pleasure to do anything for her, and what is more, I could tell you something, Mrs. Simpson, that would alter your tone uncommonly, I think!"

Mrs. Simpson would not believe that, so Philip thought it was right to tell her, that Ellen when she was working at Lady Seymour's, overheard Miss Eustace talking to Miss Julia, about the Simpsons, and giving her money to relieve them, under the promise of secresy. With

strict injunctions to the same, Ellen had told Philip, only he thought he was justified in letting it out now. The woman cried bitterly as he told her this, and asked if there was any chance of Miss Eustace soon returning. Oh yes, she was expected home to-day: and Philip rose to take leave. "It's getting dark; be careful how you go, and thank you for your kindness. You'll go and see my poor man as often as you can, and speak a word for him to the gentlefolks. He has a good heart, has poor Jem, though he is a bit rough with us sometimes."

Philip buttoned his coat over his chest, and set off at a rapid pace to cross the moor, but had not gone many yards before he heard himself called. He stopped unwillingly, and waited till the pursuer came up, a tall woman, wrapped in a coarse cloak, who seemed to walk with difficulty, and was forced to pause a few minutes before she was able to speak.

"Do you remember ever seeing me?" was her first question. It was now nearly dark, but Philip, after some consideration, thought he did: she was the woman Mr. Revis had saved from the fire.

"Just so," she said, "he did save me: and small thanks did he get for it, for life is of small value in a case like mine, but for those who have youth and gold and friends, it's better worth saving. You spoke of Miss Eustace just now to Mrs. Simpson. Have you a mind to serve her?"

"A very great mind, if I see the chance," replied Philip, on whom Ellen's description of the young lady had evidently made a warm impression. The woman led him a few yards further on, and pointed across the moor to a spot where a pollard oak stood darkly against the fading

sky. "Do you see that tree?" she whispered, "those who wish her evil, and hate her for her father's sake, make that their meeting place, and plans are laid there would startle some of your magistrates not a little. Home you must go, as fast as you can; take care you are not stopped on the way, and warn Miss Eustace's friends that she is in danger. If she has not by this time reached her home, she will scarcely reach it to-night. Let her beware of her own servants; they are not all true, or we should not know so well all her movements."

"And your name?" asked Philip, eagerly, "who shall I say gave the information?"

"Tell no one but Mr. Revis's servant: and tell her only in private: I shall stay here at present: and if Miss Eustace should ask after me, Mrs. Mayflower will know where to find me. Now haste, young man, or you may be too late."

Philip lost no more time in deliberation. He set off at his best pace, not without some misgivings, for the place was wild and solitary, and he had a long dreary walk before him: the rapidly closing darkness gave strange shapes to every tree, and bank, and stone he passed, nor could he help starting now and then as the wind swept round and seemed to bring voices with it. He just knew enough of the Chartist clubs, to have a particular desire not to fall in with them, but his desire was not gratified. Deceived by the darkness, he mistook his way, and came within sight of the trysting tree before he was aware. Scarcely had he recognised the spot, before the leafless branches became suddenly vividly distinct in a red light, that shot up from the road below; and Philip could distinguish the shadows of men moving to and fro, and the

low murmur as of voices consulting. He paused in doubt, and with a natural sensation of fear: but this he soon dispelled; it might be a work of danger, but he would brave it, as Ellen and Mr. Revis would have him do: and commending himself to God, he laid himself flat on the turf, and crept cautiously on his hands and knees through the thick underwood, till he had a clear view of the scene of action.

The bank was steep and hollow; the pollard hung partly over the brink, and a kind of rude amphitheatre below was filled with men partly armed, and of the lowest class, collected round a newly kindled fire. As the light flashed first on one side, then on another, the anxious watcher had a view of the dark rugged faces: unwashed, unshorn, with shaggy hair, and dirty dress; some inflamed with spirits, others pinched with want; some sullen with brooding discontent, and others excited with fierce and passionate resolution. Of these, only a portion were known to Philip Lee: some were Chartists from manufacturing districts, who had straggled in parties to Dylam, as the most favourable spot for their deliberations: men long out of work, and who scarcely cared to find any: to whom the excitement of a riot was pleasanter than the monotony of labour; and too familiar, thanks to the instructions of their leaders, with all the democratic arguments of the day, to be easily convinced that order is liberty's best friend. Their arms were not formidable in appearance; the majority had only cudgels, the guns of the corps belonged entirely to such members as a taste for sport induced to follow it on their neighbour's property, without the expense of a license: and to these Lord Eustace's severity had made him peculiarly obnoxi-

ous. It was evident they were waiting here for somebody, as nothing was done but smoking pipes, feeding the fire, and lounging about the road; occasionally exchanging a coarse jest, smothered laugh, or muttered imprecation, on the slowness of their comrades. Philip, cold as the evening was, grew fevered with impatience and anxiety: he dared not quit his hiding place, lest he should attract notice, yet the time was slipping away, and no warning had been given. He was at last on the point of resolving to run the risk, and retire, when a movement among those on the look out, announced some expected arrival, and in a few minutes another detachment of the band came up in haste and confusion. Vehement was the volley of questions: and Philip strained every organ to catch the replies of the new comers: but it was not till one who appeared a leader, had used some forcible methods of extracting obedience, that there was a sufficient lull to gratify his desire. Then it came out, that the carriage they had been watching for, had taken another road, and reached the Hall in safety: two of them had followed it to the woods, and exchanged a word or two with their comrade: and from what he said, they fancied the coachman had played them false: and had purposely conveyed his young mistress by the safer road. Philip drew a long breath: the listening crowd uttered a groan of rage. "What is to be done now?" asked one, "Simpson and Jones and the rest in jail, and nothing done to help 'em out?"

"Who said nothing would be done?" interposed the leader, sharply, "our plans rest on something sounder than a jarvey's wig, too! They think themselves safe now they are in the Hall; but the Hall can't slip away by another road, boys, if we've a mind for a look at *that!*" A

cheer was the unanimous response. "The Hall! the Hall! the Charter for ever!" and a rush was made at the fire; every brand was torn out, the embers scattered to the winds, and the burning fragments flourished over the heads of the crowd, gave a wild terror to the scene that would have fired the pulse of a Fuseli. Dark passions let loose; fierce desires within sight of gratification; envy, discontent, revenge, the rankling sense of wrong; the carefully fostered notion of political oppression: strong faculties untrained; manly power and energy unguided by faith: all the long, long arrears of the neglect of rulers and teachers, starting up like fiends from the abyss to demand the fulfilment of their bond!

The plan thus hastily formed, took now a more distinct shape: it was concerted that two bodies should penetrate the grounds in different directions, avoiding Eastbury village: "for once rouse the parson," Philip heard one of them say, "and he would be running over their backs like a dog among sheep." All being arranged, the firebrands were quenched; each party being provided with combustible materials if wanted: and in darkness and silence the two masses moved away, and the heavy fall of their footsteps was gradually lost in the distance, as they turned in opposite directions over the moor.

Then Philip Lee, nearly stiff with his long confinement to one posture, scrambled out of the bushes, and with one vigorous stretch to bring his lungs and muscles into order, set off at full speed for Eastbury Rectory.

Lionel Revis had gone through a long, tiring day, beginning at five in the morning: and beneath the varied exertions of mind and body, even his well-trained powers had given way; and instead of sitting at his desk, writing

at the Commentary, though the candles were burning, and the pen and ink ready for action, he had fallen back in the old lady's armchair, and was as soundly asleep as ever was its original possessor. What were the dreams that beguiled that period of forgetfulness; whose were the bright faces that glanced through his brain, and what the rough hand that suddenly swept them away, he was not in the habit of telling, and therefore no one is ever likely to know: strange noises mingled with his visions; Julia Seymour's hand turned into that of Richard Durant, and by some perverse combination of ideas, all the bells seemed to be pealing at once in honour of his approaching nuptials with old Mrs. Lee. There was no rest in such dreams as these: he started up, the vision was gone, but the bell was ringing still: only instead of the church chime, it was that of his own door. A strange feeling of excitement came over him; the bell sounded unusually loud and imperative, and Joseph had never been so long fumbling with the lock. He snatched up a candle, and looked down the staircase: a gasping, breathless voice was just saying, "Mr. Revis, I *must* see Mr. Revis:" to which Joseph was suggesting, if it was only a christening, Mr. Barnard would perhaps do as well. "No, no!" said the other voice, "no one else will do: he must see me! Mr. Revis, sir! where are you! it is a case of life and death!"

Lionel was down stairs in a moment: there stood Philip Lee, covered with mud, dripping with perspiration, trembling with eagerness and fatigue. His tale was told in a few seconds, and in as few was Lionel's mind made up. "Marian!" his faithful handmaid obeyed the summons, but started at the expression of his face, "Marian,

give Lee some supper: and bolt every door and window: I must take your husband with me; but God's protection will be round you. Pray for us; He only knows what may happen to-night."

But Philip would not be left behind: a draught of beer, which was fetched in one minute and swallowed in another, was all he would have. Wherever the Rector went, he meant to follow, or Ellen would never look at him again. So May, not at all happy in her mind, was left alone to guard the Rectory, and fasten old hats in all manner of conspicuous and impossible situations, to delude a besieging force into the belief of a formidable garrison: and shut herself up in Mr. Revis's study, resolved, come who chose, she would have a fight for the Commentary: and when nobody came, and the lonely hours passed on, to comfort herself by a good cry.

Time was so precious, Lionel speedily dismissed his companions, in spite of their remonstrances; sending one to alarm Farmer Gray, and his men, and the other to sound a tocsin from the belfry. He himself hastened to the Lodge: and it being no moment for considering delicate nerves, burst into the dining-room, where Sir John and a party of hunting friends were finishing a tolerable allowance of claret. The sight of the Rector, his blue eyes on fire with the excitement that filled his frame, his hair disordered and his chest heaving with the speed he had made, electrified the jovial group: and the bottle dropped from the hand of Sir John.

"Gentlemen, the mob are gone up to the Hall, and Miss Eustace is there unprotected! If you are men, up to her rescue!"

"Miss Eustace? the mob? how do you know? when did you hear?" cried half-a-dozen voices at once: Lionel

heeded none, he was speaking eagerly to Sir John. "Take my word for the truth of the report: God grant we may not be too late as it is: you have servants, guns, horses: take all; every one may be wanted: no fear of an attack on the village: only make haste, if you have a spark of feeling for an amiable and defenceless young lady!"

Sir John sprang to his feet, and was imitated by all his guests, except Mr. Durant, whose late accident had deprived him of some of his usual agility though not of his critical acumen. "I should just propose," said the latter, "that a messenger run in the direction of the Hall, to make sure that it *is* so, that we may not be made the laughing stock of the country by starting on a Quixote scheme."

"If any laugh to-night," said Lionel, "it will be at the bitterest jest that was ever made! A messenger is unnecessary; I am going now to the Hall myself."

"And gout be my portion," cried Sir John, "if I do not overtake you! Ring the bell, Carey, there's a good fellow; call up all the men, Gotham! every one: we can spare nobody to-night: rescue Miss Eustace? ay, that we will. I always told my Lord what it would come to: but I'll stand by him, while I can lift a finger."

In a few minutes the alarm had spread like wildfire through the house, and the ladies rushed from the drawing-room: in all that excitement and consternation natural to the occasion. And in the midst of the confusion of eager voices, ordering, questioning, shouting, Julia suddenly found Mr. Revis by her side, and her hand firmly held in his. A glow, that even the tumult of the moment could not hinder, thrilled through her heart, as she looked in his face, pale with excitement, and quivering with contending emotions.

"Miss Seymour, do not be alarmed," he said, still nervously holding her hand, "there is no idea of danger in this quarter, and for your sweet friend, believe me, I will guard her life with my own."

"But *you*, Mr. Revis," said Julia, eagerly, "I know you will do all for others; but indeed, you must not expose yourself rashly! Promise me you will not!"

He wrung her hand with an energy that at a less excited moment would have given her no little pain, then broke through the crowd and disappeared.

"Dear me! dear me!" said Miss Belinda, coming up to where Julia stood, still gazing on the darkness in which she had lost Lionel's form, "what a very disagreeable and uncomfortable kind of affair all this is. I sha'nt think of going home to-night: it is all because dear Richard was not put into parliament: dear Richard always said there would be a revolution if he wasn't. I am sure it is not safe for all the gentlemen to go and leave *us*. Why can't somebody send a policeman to read the Riot Act to the mob, and get rid of them? or call out the militia, or the habeas corpus? It must be a comfort to you, dear Richard is here! because he can tell you all what you ought to do."

"Oh, Beatrice!" thought Julia, on whom this last consolation was quite thrown away; "my beautiful, glorious Beatrice! and you are in danger, and he will be near you, and I must stay here, and do nothing!"

The stately armoury of Eustace Hall, a long, lofty, room, with large windows looking down on the terraces, and lawn, and a deep glade in the woods, never looked so well as when lighted up by a profusion of bronze lamps, fit for the chivalrous board of the knights of the

olden time. The flashing of the burnished shields; the glitter of spear and falchion, and gauntlet and helm; the deep shadow of the drooping banners; the mysterious look of reality about the mailed figures, that stood in their cold grim repose against the tapestried walls, threw a species of gloomy enchantment round this room, in which the spirit of Beatrice Eustace found its native atmosphere. And here, on this eventful evening, was she moving in melancholy silence to and fro: no unsuitable tenant of that chivalrous chamber, not one of whose knightly lances was ever couched for a form more fair. Her head bent down, her hands lightly clasped behind her back, her step slow and measured, her person drooping with languor, she might have been taken for the high souled, ill requited heroine whose portrait looked down upon her from its dark oaken frame, weighing in her mind the possibility of further resistance, and unable to shut out the conviction that all was lost indeed.

Miss Eustace had not passed unscathed through the winter that had tried so many. Whatever her private trials had been, she had spoken of them to none: but their trace was plainly visible. She was thinner, paler, more fragile, more melancholy, than when we saw her last under Lady Seymour's care. Mrs. Hargrave herself had noticed the change; and it was partly owing to a secret alarm at the daily increasing languor, and long fits of morbid silence, that her companion had proposed their return to the Hall. Her cousin Mr. Hargrave had met them by appointment, and Beatrice left them to their coffee and communications, while she took refuge in the solitary musings that soothed while they deepened her melancholy. The low moan of the wind, the distant bay

of the hounds at the keeper's lodge, the ticking of the bronze horologe on the mantelpiece, were the only sounds that fell on her ear: and they were all in unison with the spirit of the hour.

"Home!" thought Beatrice, as she walked slowly up and down, "home! that haven of the wanderer, that Canaan of the weary, that Eden of the exile's dreams! Home—that word of music and beauty, which concentrates all that is loveliest upon earth, which presents the holiest type that faith can picture of heaven! What is it to *me?* It offers me no welcome; it lights up for me no joy; its walls enclose me like a prison; its breath is like a sepulchre's chill. Weary and tempest-driven, I come back to the ark: but it is no ark of refuge for me! The deluge is kinder; the deep is more merciful; the grave offers a less troubled rest!

"Mournful as the wail of the night wind, chill and heavy as the atmosphere, leafless as the winter bough, lifeless as these forms of iron, are the visions that look through my soul. Where is the beauty of earth? where is the young glow of hopeful energy? who has covered the face of creation with this grey and misty veil, wherein hill and valley, meadow and wilderness, appear unlovely and joyless alike? What has poured through my veins this cold and heavy stream, that beyond the penetration of man to discern, or the skill of man to eradicate, day after day, and hour after hour, drains my heart of its springs of life?

"Stern and iron-souled champions of the days of old! inflexible as your own broad bucklers, and keen as your lance's point! how has the fire of your courage and heroism dwindled away to a dying spark! Yours were lives

of action, of struggle, of attainment, of grappling with enemies, of protecting your loved ones, of snatching earth's glory, and wearing it like a wreath! Poetry has embalmed you; history has done you justice; you lived according to your age, and chivalry was justified of her children! But of me, the last of your race, whose lot it has been to hold a brimming cup of blessing, of which not a drop might reach my burning lip—what could poet, or historian, or annalist write of me? They could but trace a blank and profitless desert; where much was begun; much was hoped for; much might have been brought to fruition; but over which the burning south wind has swept, and in whose ruins Death has found a shrine! ..."

Miss Eustace stopped suddenly in her walk: she was conscious of a step behind her, and in her nervous state, it was enough to make her start and tremble. The voice of Mr. Hargrave, hardly raised above his breath, gently apologised for the intrusion: his cousin had favoured his presuming to follow Miss Eustace: it was an occasion that so rarely offered: a privilege he could not esteem too highly: if Miss Eustace only knew, only imagined the deep respect, profound admiration, unreserved worship he felt for her, personally and mentally, she would feel more for the hopelessness that must oppress his reason, in measuring the distance between them. And in this strain he proceeded some time, for Beatrice, leaning on the back of a chair, neither moved nor spoke: till encouraged by her passiveness, he ventured to take her hand, and lift it to his lips. His touch was like an electric blow: she flung her hand away as from a reptile, and retreating to the wall, stood wildly looking upon him,

in the shadow of a huge mailed hero of her ancient line.

"*You*, Mr. Hargrave!" No language could express the depth of aversion breathed in that short sentence: Hargrave felt it to the quick, and ground his teeth to think he should so have mistaken his time. He renewed his protestations, his vows, his homage: pleaded his devotion to Lord Eustace, the many proofs of regard he had received from him, the security entertained both by himself and his cousin, of his Lordship's full approval, and finally, as he perceived no symptoms of relaxing on her part, dropped a hint, forcible and plain, of a dangerous power lodged in his hands that might make him formidable to provoke. And he turned to Mrs. Hargrave, who had crept stealthily in after him, and called on her to support and confirm his words.

"My dear Beatrice," said that lady, advancing with a smile, "knows how I should rejoice to have a nearer claim on her confidence than even our long friendship can give."

Miss Eustace turned her eyes slowly upon her face. "And it is to *this* then that your long friendship has led me?"

"And if it has, my dear love, can I give you a stronger proof of my affection?"

Miss Eustace smiled bitterly. "Impossible," she said, "it is a proof, not only of your affection, *that* I could scarcely doubt; but also of the disinterestedness on which circumstances might cast a suspicion."

The cousins exchanged a glance. "Can Miss Eustace doubt," said Mr. Hargrave, "that our devotion to her *is* disinterested?"

"Doubt, sir?" returned Beatrice, coming forward with dignity, her frame trembling with emotion, and her eye gleaming darkly beneath her bent brow, "there is no room left for doubting. It is plain that your interests are the same; that your minds are the same; and that what has been trusted to the honour of the one, is communicated for the purposes of the other. How it is that you are trusted by my father: how it is that you are enabled to use his name, his wealth and his authority, as you do, persecuting his dependants, and moulding his will to your own, is known best to you and him! I only look upon you as you appear to me; and the utmost cruelty your vengeance can devise will be light, compared with the degradation of hearing such an insult renewed. Accept this, Mr. Hargrave, as my final answer, and if it is indeed in your power to injure me," her voice faltered, and sunk to its usual quiet sadness, "whatever the injury may be, it cannot hurt me long."

Mr. Hargrave eyed her as she spoke, his face growing white with suppressed rage: he bowed low in reply, and his look was sinister in its significance. "I will no longer intrude upon you, madam. Priscilla, good night. You shall hear from me soon." He left the room, and Beatrice and her companion stood, looking in each other's eyes.

"Very well, very well!" said Mrs. Hargrave, "I see the tone you are beginning to assume. You think us not good enough for you: you insult us with insinuations of dishonesty: let us see how Lord Eustace will look when he hears what I shall have to tell him."

"Tell him but the truth," said Beatrice, "and I need not fear."

"The *whole* truth?" said Mrs. Hargrave, drily.

Miss Eustace writhed, and turned away. "Am I to understand there is but one alternative? that I must receive your cousin's addresses, or be betrayed?"

Mrs. Hargrave quietly replied in the affirmative: Beatrice walked to the further end of the room, then suddenly came back, and stood before her. "And my father—proud, tenacious, as you know him to be, how will he hear of such a proposal without indignation?"

"He may be indignant as you are," replied Mrs. Hargrave, coolly, "but there are arguments for him as well as for you."

"Give his daughter to his agent? the last of his line, the heiress of his rank and estates, to one who has nothing to offer in return, not even a heart? What strange delusion possesses you that the very idea will not at once make a breach between him and you both?"

"Simply," said Mrs. Hargrave, "that, elevated, powerful, wealthy as he is, it is in my power to strip him of all. Come, my dear Beatrice," advancing gently with open hand, "let us talk this over in a cooler frame of mind. You know how truly I have your interest at heart, and if it were not that my cousin is so impatient and eager, you should not be pressed on the subject so warmly. He knows too much to be safely provoked, and your wisest course now and always is to consider us, as we always have been, your truest and most faithful friends."

She attempted to take Beatrice by the hand: but she started back, with a look of deeper horror than she had ever manifested before.

"My father too in your power? and in his native halls, and before the portraits of his ancestors, you dare threaten

him with ruin and disgrace? and you do not fear that these senseless plates of steel, that so well guarded the honour of our name of old, will not find a voice to cry shame upon your treachery?" She laid her hand in her excitement on the tall model of the first Baron Eustace; and his iron gauntlet, shaken from its worn fastening, fell with a heavy clash to the ground.

Before the echo of that ominous sound had died away; before either of the startled pair had moved or spoken; there fell other tones upon their ears that made both hearts beat with a fearful sense of coming evil. The hasty closing of doors, the murmur of voices, the shuffle of agitated feet, succeeded more rapidly than words could describe: and the next moment Mr. Hargrave, followed by the head-keeper and two or three other men, burst into the armoury. In the wildest agony of terror, he seized Miss Eustace by the dress. "You will not give me up; you will not cast me out; you will not refuse me shelter; you will defend me, stand by me, will you not? Oh, Miss Eustace, I am a lost, doomed man! they hate me, they have sworn to take my life! they will tear me to pieces! they will burn me alive! I have served your father faithfully; I never meant anything but respect to yourself; save me, Miss Eustace! save me, in this dreadful danger, and make me your slave for ever!"

"If you please, ma'am," put in Matthew, the head-keeper, "there's no time to lose in deciding."

"And what is the danger? what has happened?" asked Beatrice, vainly attempting to free her dress from Hargrave's clasp; but before any answer could be given in words, it was fully uttered by a hoarse roar without, that sent the life-blood back to the hearts of all who heard.

A shriek burst from the passage, where a crowd of the servants had collected: and through the chinks of the shutter could plainly be discerned the glare of a red light that told its own tale of warning. The mob had made their way through the woods, and the Hall was in a state of siege.

It was indeed no time to stand deliberating: Miss Eustace, terrified as she was, preserved her self-possession, and to her all turned for orders; for neither of her companions were capable of giving even advice. She had never seen the resolute Mrs. Hargrave so overcome: the alarm of her cousin and counsellor seemed contagious; she sat silent and pale, almost fainting, while Beatrice was holding a brief and hurried council with her retainers; and only interposed to falter a petition that neither she nor poor Christopher should be given up to the mob. Miss Eustace smiled as she assured them of such protection as she could give: a strange, blended smile, partly bitter, partly sad, partly touched with pity: what a change of position had one moment wrought between them! She advised their both retiring to a safer part of the house, which they submissively did, and left her alone with braver friends.

Beatrice at once gave Matthew the command of the garrison; and Matthew, a cool, daring forester, with very few scruples where his master's interest was concerned, at once set himself to the sturdy fulfilment of his trust. There was no time for forms and ceremonies; all hands were called to assist in barricading the windows with mattresses, and piling heavy furniture against the doors; the mob seemed disposed to give them a breathing-space, while they built up a huge bonfire on the lawn, and Matthew made

the most of the opportunity. When all the stablemen, gardeners, and helpers were called together, with his own satellites, and the coachman and footmen, there appeared a tolerable muster, as far as numbers were concerned, though scarcely as much bravery as could be wished. Messrs. Leech and Doyle might have found ample subjects for their witty pencils in the confused legion, half in livery, half in fustian, powdered curls, and shock heads, huddled together without regard to rank and costume: contrasted with the broad bold figure of Matthew grasping his gun, as he gave his imperative directions; and the quiet beauty of Miss Eustace, standing calmly by, feeling the lowering danger as keenly as them all, yet ready to endure if she could not resist. Her self-command was not without its effect: the most cowardly of her domestics were ashamed to give way to their hysterical affections before the clear, brave glance of the young mistress, whose peril was so much greater than their own. Matthew, however, darting his sharp eye from one to the other, weighed the heroism of his garrison as he would a powder-charge; and came to the conclusion that the greater show they made the better. So one was sent to one place with a fowling-piece, and another somewhere else with a pistol; and all received instructions to put the boldest face possible on every emergency, to answer every summons in the sharpest tones, and to behave as if they had an army at their backs, and an admiring nation to watch and reward their deeds. Miss Eustace's consent was obtained to pressing into the public service every weapon that could be found in the family treasury; and Matthew gave her a private hint, that if the Hall was to be maintained at all, it must be by cheating the mob with a show of tremendous courage. "Just

see those shaking puppies in plush and lace, ma'am, not half so cool as that youngster Paul, or as you are yourself: if I had but as many stout keepers with double barrels, and if we were in a thick covert, instead of behind walls and shutters, I'd undertake to pick off every leader among the mob, without their once finding out who pulled the trigger."

"What is it the crowd are shouting? Are they not calling for some one? Listen, Matthew!" said Beatrice.

"So long as they spend their lungs in shouting, ma'am, they'll not do us much harm: if you've a mind to see what they are doing, I'll take you to a beautiful corner, where a rifle and a quick eye would be a match for a dozen Chartists."

A strange feeling of curiosity prevailed over fear: Miss Eustace followed the keeper upstairs, and stationing herself according to his directions, beheld a sight more like a wild dream than a reality.

In their passage through the woods, the crowd had made havoc among the trees and thickets, and Birnam had come to Dunsinane, with the manifest intention of making itself into a bonfire at least. A pile of boughs, and logs, and brushwood had been reared on the lawn immediately at the foot of the lowest terrace, and suspended over it from a kind of rude gallows, were three effigies, by courtesy so called, evidently meant for her father, Mr. Hargrave, and herself. The coarse crowd swarmed round the pile, as if more bent on testifying their resentment by signs than by actual warfare, and shouts and execrations and bursts of rude laughter rose in deafening chorus as the torches were applied to the heap, and the combustibles with which it was plentifully strewed, lighted it up in a strong, roar-

ing blaze. The red light illuminated the whole front of the Hall and the terraces, and gave a look of unearthly ferocity to the dark forms moving about in the smoke: in a few minutes the flames caught the effigies, and they were consumed amid a burst of applause. Miss Eustace shuddered at the spectacle. "To be so hated, so cursed, so reviled! What have I done to deserve it? what can I do to convince them it is undeserved? that I would share my last morsel with the lowest among them, and stoop to the meanest office to win one heartfelt blessing? They are blinded by prejudice; they do not know me: I will see if they will listen to the voice of reason and truth, come what may of my rashness."

She threw up the window, and in the glare of the fire-light her figure was plainly visible to the mob. And then rose a tempest of sounds, hooting, hissing, and groaning, as drowned even the roar of the flames, and blanched both the cheek and lip of the unfortunate young lady. She stood without power to move, clinging to the window-frame with one hand, the other vainly soliciting a hearing; the uproar increased every minute: at last a stone was flung, though far short of its aim, and then, with a sudden movement in the crowd, came a flash, and a bullet whizzed past her head, and buried itself in the opposite wall.

Who fired that cowardly shot could not be ascertained. Matthew came running to his lady's assistance, and forcibly dragged her from the window, just as Mrs. Hargrave, equally attracted by the report, rushed into the room. Beatrice, hardly knowing what she did, caught her by the arm, and buried her face on her shoulder. All sense of wrong and hatred seemed merged in the excited emotions of the hour: and Mrs. Hargrave, feeling the wild beat-

ing of her heart against hers, could not but speak in soothing terms, asking how she could so expose her valuable life. "My life?" repeated Beatrice, raising her head, and drawing away from her support, "my life? is it mine? dare I seek to preserve it? is it not given up already? must not the law of God and man have its course? and this night, and by the hands of these misguided people, will not Edward's blood be required?"

"No, no!" replied Mrs. Hargrave, in agitation equal to her own, "it is cruel, wicked to say so!" The cold dew was on her brow, and her eyes were red with weeping. "It will be murder, cold-blooded murder if they do! Our friends will soon be here: we shall be rescued: it is impossible they will leave us in such frightful danger as this: but do not speak of Edward now, Beatrice, or I shall go mad!"

"Now, ma'am!" cried Matthew, who was standing at the window, sheltered by the wall, with his piece levelled: "now, ma'am, I have one of them poaching fellows just within range; and I think it must be the one as fired that shot: shall I knock him quite over, or only send him to cover?"

Miss Eustace flew to his side. "Not for the world, Matthew! I would sooner go out, and give myself up to the people, than have a drop of blood shed for me! My desire, my entreaty is, that you do not attempt to fire!"

The agony of her voice, the tears in her beautiful eyes, disarmed the keeper in spite of himself: he sullenly drew back the muzzle of his gun, and walked off, muttering, "Just as you please, of course, and it's all right, I suppose; but to see Jack Saunders strutting about there, and have him in one's mouth, as it were, and not hit him, is

more than one's patience can stand. I could have taken him just at the elbow, where it wouldn't have done him much harm; but which would have spoiled his shooting for the next twelve months: and now the rascal will be as busy as ever, and I may never get such a chance again!"

A cry rang from the lower part of the house. "Help! murder! help!" and Matthew, flying to the spot, perceived Paul struggling with one of the footmen, close to a side door, that led to Miss Eustace's flower garden, and which, though the keeper himself had bolted it, was now standing open. Paul had fastened on the liveried traitor like a cat, shouting for help whenever his enemy's hand moved from his mouth, but it might have gone hard with him the next minute, if Matthew had not appeared. Without waiting for the ceremony of questions, he seized Thomas round the waist, and rolled him on his back upon the floor. The man however was the more nimble of the two, and regaining his feet in a moment, darted out of the door across the garden. Matthew understood the danger at once. "The villain will explain our weakness, and bring the whole pack on us directly. Hillyho! every one of you! Come down and stand together, if you wish to keep whole bones in your jackets!"

This door was in fact one of the least defensible in the house: and made still less so by having had the lock privately damaged. Before any effectual fastening could be secured, the leading rank of the rioters were seen coming up the lawn. They carried between them the trunk of a young tree as a battering ram, and at a steady run that would have done credit to a more disciplined regiment, advanced to charge the door, Matthew and his

helpers, by a desperate effort, pushed a ponderous piece of furniture against it, which enabled it to resist the first shock, but the charge of numbers was too powerful to be long withstood: and he called on them all to keep their pieces pointed and cocked, as the next minute might bring the whole mob about their ears. "The first among 'em is marked for sartain," added he, "let my young lady say what she will." His young lady was at this instant standing on the staircase immediately looking on the scene of action: all their lives being now at stake, she dared not forbid resistance: but her agony was silent and intense. Whatever peril they ran, her mind was made up to share: she prayed inwardly for help, not that her life might be spared, if it was the will of heaven to make it a sacrifice, but that her's might be the only death: that no more blood might cry for vengeance against her.

There was a pause of awful suspense: the rush of the assailants was heard coming on: the voices of the leaders cheering them forward, and Matthew as he steadily raised the muzzle of his piece, muttered to himself, "Hunted down like a badger by Jack Saunders at last! He shall find it a harder job than he reckons on. Steady now, boys, all of you! Young Buttons, keep that pistol out of the line of my leg: if they break in this time we must fire all at once upon their rush: and then God help us!"

"Matthew, Matthew!" cried Miss Eustace, bending over the balusters, "why should you risk your lives for nothing? I will go out and speak to the people: it is me they want—none of you have offended them!"

"Do you hear *that*, lads?" was all the sturdy keeper's reply, "shall we give up our young lady to be worried by

a yelping pack like this? Here they come, now for it!"

But instead of the expected charge, there was a sudden stillness without, as if a torrent had been icebound in a moment.

A few more minutes' suspense and wonder: during which Matthew had time to conjecture whether Jack Saunders was not going to fire a train against the door: and then as by some irresistible impulse, burst from the crowd a long thrilling cheer, whose heartiness contrasted fearfully with the dead silence of the group within.

"What new mischief is this? some favourite ringleader arrived, I suppose: jump up a top of the chest, Buttons, and peep through the hole in the shutter: if it is, I'll have him, as sure as he is born."

Paul laid his weapon, a petronel of the seventeenth century, very formidable in every respect but the trifling one of lacking a flint, in the lap of Mrs. Newman, as she sat trembling at the foot of the stairs, and regardless of her remonstrances at such a measure, scrambled up to the hole, and gave his serious attention to the scene without. Gradually, the excited eagerness of his face relaxed into its usual benignity of expression, and when he turned round to his anxious friends, never did a broad grin appear to Miss Eustace more lovely. "Speak out, instead of grimacing there like a young monkey?" cried Matthew, "what are they about? who is there?"

Before the boy could answer, another sound rose without, and it was one they all knew well: a clear, silvery voice raised in the full tones of generous expostulation, and speaking with that forcible, nervous energy that neither learned nor unlearned could ever hear unmoved.

"It is Mr. Revis!" exclaimed every body at once, and Beatrice felt as if a sunbeam had broke in upon the darkness of midnight. "Open the door, Matthew!" she said, "open it instantly! he will deliver or die for us, and he must not be left there alone! Open the door! his presence is more protection than a hundred bars and bolts."

The command was too imperative to be disputed; Paul leaped to the ground and regained his pistol; the barricade was thrust aside, and the door thrown wide open: and there stood Lionel Revis, the sole barrier between the besieged and their foes.

He saw at a glance the weakness and the strength of his position: neither Mirabeau nor Mark Antony possessed a keener eye for scrutinizing a multitude, or a more subtle capacity for moulding it to his will. Well said Dr. Nathaniel Hooper, that he must either do great harm or good! Such a power over the hearts of the poor would have made him, had he aspired thereto, a chieftain among demagogues, and a terror to property and order. But he was, happily, as single minded as he was far sighted: and held every faculty of his genius as dust in the balance, in comparison with the real good of the souls with whom he had to do.

They were brave, cheering words he spoke to them: words to pierce the heart, and ring in the ear, and set every pulse beating with the strong life of hope and action. And they were such as he had more than common right to use, for he had sat in their dwellings, and heard their troubles, and counselled their difficulties, and given a helping hand when needed most: he was not one to flatter their passions, but neither would he talk lightly of their griefs: as misguided, as sinful, as ignorant and un-

wise, he addressed them: but also as burdened, as suffering, as worn with toil and hardship. He spoke of trouble as one who knew its meaning, but who also knew its end and its comforts: he did not feed their pride and self-importance by telling them they were underrated in society, oppressed by the law, and led blindfold by superstition and craft: on the contrary, he courageously maintained, that they *were* cared for; that their fellow-men *did* feel for them; and that much having been already done, there was much more they were willing to do, if not hindered by outrages like these. Murmurs rose hereupon, from the stranger Chartists; and a tall, broad-shouldered fellow, with strength and health, and everything but industry, who might have earned an honest living, if he had not preferred the cudgel to the pickaxe, pushed to the foremost rank of the crowd, and asked, if it was feeling for a man to let him starve?"

"Well, really my friend," said Lionel, turning quickly round upon him, "for a starving man you look in tolerable condition, too." A crowd always like a joke, and when Lionel heard them laugh, he knew one point was gained. He raised his voice like a trumpet call, and answered the question by another.

"*Starve?* Men! did we let you starve this winter? Men of Dylam, who had no claim upon our parish funds, did we keep our purses and hearts closed against you? Collins! Wharton! Johnson! I see you all standing there: you can bear witness whether you went uncared for or not! Answer, did Eastbury forget you?"

There was a brief cheer in reply: Lionel made a step forward and held his hand aloft in an attitude that rivetted attention. "You know we did not: you know the sum

that was raised for your relief: you know how it was distributed: you all shared the benefit: who do you think gave the larger half of the subscription? to whom do you suppose you owe most?"

There was a murmur of surprise. He turned half round and pointed to the open door, and the quiet graceful figure that stood in the glowing light; "To the liberal hand of Miss Eustace, who through the whole of this winter, has been in the constant habit of forwarding help to *you*, who make her a return like this!"

Neither Miss Eustace nor her besiegers were prepared for such an explanation: a silence of some moments followed, as if both parties were taken by surprise: then Beatrice shrunk back into the shadow, and the crowd burst into a roar of applause.

An English mob, wherever assembled, and however composed, contains almost always, a certain amount of good sense and feeling to which the truth is not spoken in vain: it is not always possible to reach it, and when reached, it may be led astray by hasty impulse, but once plainly appealed to, it will in some way assert its power; and signally was it effective on this occasion. The tide that had so strongly set against the name of the young lady for months past, now, on this convincing testimony, turned as decidedly in her favour, and long and loud were the cheers that announced their change of sentiments. Matthew smiled as if satisfied, and uncocked his gun: Paul rushed to a dark corner where he might roll on the floor in unobserved delight: Mrs. Newman and the rest of the scared handmaidens, gave vent to their relieved feelings in a variety of ways, such as crying, laughing, fainting, and the like: and Priscilla Hargrave, as she

stood in the apartment above, by her cousin's side, heard the name of Beatrice repeated in a chorus of applause, and knew that the danger was past. And a desolate chill fell on her ambitious spirit, as if in the triumph of the unhappy girl she had oppressed, she saw a coming shadow threatening discovery and downfal. As for Mr. Hargrave, he was so perfectly paralysed with fear, he could only sit wiping the dew from his forehead, and trying to shut out the wild fierce sounds in which he expected every minute to hear his sentence of death.

Lionel Revis felt and blessed his victory: the colour mounted to his cheek, and every pulse throbbed with the fire of generous emotion. He waved his hat over his head as his tribute to the general burst of feeling: then, watching his opportunity, when the noise was beginning to subside, held up his hand to solicit audience, and all were instantly hushed. The whole of the crowd had poured into the flower garden, trampling down the carefully matted shrubs without compunction, and leaving the bonfire to burn out unheeded, while, as with one heart, they stood listening for the voice whose sway held their passions like a spell.

Lionel was strongly excited: his hand shook visibly as he held it pointing upwards, and his articulation was solemn and distinct as a full-toned bell. "You have felt generously, and as I thought you would: you have shown that you have hearts, as I knew you had: the sound of unknown benefits has warmed you towards the giver, and you love *her*, because she first loved *you*. Is there no other Being to whom you owe a grateful debt? Is there none beside who has crowned you with goodness, to whom you have made even a more bitter return?

"Workmen, labourers, struggling, toil-burdened poor —look up *there!* In that starlit heaven sits the God of work; the Father who has appointed *your* share, and *mine!* Has He appointed it unjustly? has He weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, and yet erred in the measure between man and man? Can He roll the stars on their appointed track, and give rain to the earth, and tides to the sea, and yet mistake in the guidance of His creatures' pilgrimage? Has He poured forth the riches of His providence and wisdom: has He given you the blood of His Eternal Son: has He set before you an open door that you may enter freely into the happiness of His Heaven: and does He not care for your well-doing on earth? I challenge the boldest of you to reply.

"Work is the law of man's life: it is his breath, his health, his riches. God works; angels work; the sovereign works; the statesman works; the minister works; often on a harder soil than them all! You, too, work; and hardly: and it is your glory that ye do: for you fulfil the ends of your creation, and help the wheel of society to go round. In this great bond we are one: you, myself, your employers, your landlords, the noble-hearted young lady whom your blindness has so sorely wronged, the children that spring up around you, the dead, whose day of labour is done. All have or had their work to do: and God works with all: and no eye hath seen, no ear hath heard, no heart that knoweth not can conceive, how full and deep are the hidden joys of the heart with whom God is working!

"Sorrow, weariness, difficulty, disappointment, you have felt them all, and so have I. They are sad to look

at, and heavy to bear. God knows it, and therefore are they sent. Sin is in the world, man brought it in: and with sin must sorrow come too: but our Father in His boundless love has so set one against the other, that the very sorrow caused by sin becomes that sin's best cure. It makes earth dark, as we see it now, that we may look to the stars of heaven: it embitters our draught of worldly things, that we may quench our thirst in the fountain of salvation. To you, to me, to us all, is that salvation sent: woe unto us if we receive it not! doubly woe: for we shall thus throw away the comfort that would have cheered us now, and the promise that would have blest our dying hour! Friends, dear friends, brothers in sin and redemption! you came here to-night seeking evil: and the Lord has thrown mercy in your way! Take that mercy while you can! Receive it as it is offered! Love Him who has loved you so long: believe the pastor's voice, who has never ceased to pray for you! Go home, in quietness, in silence, in changed hearts and minds: blessing His goodness who has kept you from shedding blood. As to your troubles, rely on our good will: be sure while I live you shall find justice: remember the proofs of kindness given already, and trust us a little longer, to show you a little more. For those who are now in confinement for the offence of you all, depend upon it we shall do what we can: you have thrown a hindrance in our way by this step, but you may remedy it by dispersing quietly. Go home, and God be with you!"

And the people did disperse; as at a loved leader's mandate; and the last file was in the act of passing through the dark woods, when Sir John and his tardy followers rode up the drive.

It was well for Miss Eustace and her little garrison, that their sole dependance had not been on this neighbourly succour: in emergencies like these, every moment is as precious as an hour, and Sir John thought he had performed prodigies of haste, though just in time to be too late. Lionel comforted him by remarking, that though the peril now seemed over, it would be as well if some of the party would ride out on patrol, to give notice if any attempt at returning was made: not that he expected it, but that they might have nothing to reproach themselves. Sir John took the hint, and with some of his friends rode after the retiring crowd for about a mile: but observed it melted away every moment. The first impulse gone, there seemed no zeal or union left among them: occasional lingerers in threes and fours, took diligently to flight on the approach of the horsemen, and Sir John Seymour was soon convinced there was in truth nothing more to fear. In the act of pulling back his horse's rein to return, he saw a group, larger than any he had yet overtaken, standing in warm discussion at the corner of a lane: one of them was addressing the others, and his loud voice and eager gestures sufficiently betokened his hostile purpose. The Baronet pushed forward, and was in the midst of them before they were aware. "How now, gentlemen! have you not had enough of this for one night?" He was personally known to several, and they gave him a half sulky recognition. The interrupted orator turned on him angrily. "We have been gulled and cheated," he said, "and sent home like a parcel of children from school: and we aint a going to stand that, any way! We're men, and we'll be treated as men, and as strong, brave men, that can strike a blow for their rights, let the parson preach what he chooses!"

"Strike a blow, hey?" cried Sir John, recognising the speaker instantly, "yes, a pretty fellow you are, Rogers, to talk of bravery and blows, and show your fine manly courage, by striking a young lady with a stick, when she had consented to speak to you, out of kindness and good nature! You showed your legs pretty well that day, you rascal, after Mr. Revis had taken the measure of your shoulders, or I should have paid you that old score long ago."

And turning to the rest of the party, in a few, forcible words, he explained the whole of the affair referred to, asking how honest, brave Englishmen could bear to listen to such an unmanly coward as that."

"You saw it yourself, Sir John?" put in poaching Jack Saunders, who had often met the good natured Baronet before.

"That I did, Jack, as plainly as I saw you behind my hedge one day last month, and was kind enough not to fire at you."

"Lawk, Sir John! if you fired at me every time I was behind your hedge, powder would come expensive, I'm thinking: unless you took better aim at my jacket than you did at the pheasants that day. But I was just going to say, boys, if this fellow treated a young lady like that, he is no captain for me, or you, and he deserves to be ducked in the next pond, and now you have my mind."

Sir John coolly turned his horse's head. "It's the best thing you can do, I think:" and he trotted back to the Hall, hearing no small commotion going on in the spot he had quitted, and quite satisfied with his own success.

He flung the rein to the first servant he saw, ran into the house, and straight up to Miss Eustace, as she stood

by the fire among all the gentlemen; and seizing her hand in both his, shook and squeezed it till she begged for mercy. "What a meeting, to be sure, my fair neighbour, after your long absence! It reminds one of good old Froissart: I think you would make a first rate Joan of Montfort, and there is a strong touch of Sir Walter Manny in our hot-headed Rector! where has he hid himself? is he mounting guard at the kitchen door?"

"Mr. Revis is gone home," said Beatrice, her cheek flushing with animated feeling, "he would not stay to be thanked, though I owe him a deeper debt of gratitude and blessing than I can ever repay. Will you, Sir John, if you see him soon, express something to him for me? I have no words, no power of showing what I feel," her eyes glistened with tears as she spoke, "but you can tell him, better than I should dare, that I shall never rest till he has allowed me to show my gratitude: that if ever there should be anything within my ability by which a wish of his could be gratified, it is as much his as if by law and right, and will be conferring on me an additional obligation."

"Humph!" said Sir John, buttoning his coat, "a charming message to receive, truly, from so fair a source! I'll tell him, you may depend. He is a prince in spirit and courage, and as generous as he is brave: a little too particular, and rather given to hurrying one, but the best fellow in the world, and a capital judge of a horse. Ask Mr. Durant there, what he is; they were old school friends, and college chums."

Durant bowed: Miss Eustace could do no less: but it was as coldly and distantly as her gentleness would admit. The room was rapidly filling with heroic preservers and

devoted champions, all rather late, but not the least expecting thanks and praise: the whole neighbourhood was now in arms, and Beatrice, had she felt so inclined, might have held a review on the lawn, round the smouldering embers of the bonfire. Sir John, now that all thoughts of bloodshed were over, enjoyed the bustle, and stood in the hall as if he was the master of the house, to receive with a liberal allowance of jokes every fresh arrival.

There was a glow on the cheek, and a lustre in the eye of Beatrice that night, giving a sparkling animation to her beauty, that dazzled the senses of her visiters. Something unusual seemed to be stirring in her bosom, whereby the usual melancholy calm had been kindled into energy and life: her brow was troubled, but it was the trouble of new-born hope: she looked resolute, excited: yet still as if her thoughts were far away. Her greetings to her guests, with not half of whom was she acquainted; her thanks for their well intended assistance; her anxieties that no one should suffer from exposure to cold or fatigue; her offices as hostess, proffering wine and refreshments, all the courtesies becoming her position and station were performed with the grace of a princess. Marie Antoinette, as described by Lamartine on her last day of sovereignty at the Tuileries, looked not more royally beautiful; but Mrs. Hargrave, who had resumed her place at her side, and watched her narrowly, saw that her mind was on far different scenes: read the young hope and courage just wakening in her soul, and felt that without some fresh tenure, her hold upon her heart was in danger of relaxing.

It was indeed, a bright hope that had glanced across the mind of Beatrice, precious as the breaking moonbeam to the benighted wanderer: the hope, her deliverance from

this awful peril had raised, that Edward's blood was *not* required. How morbid were her sensations on the subject, the reader needs not to be reminded: so strongly was she possessed with the belief in the stern necessity of such an atonement, that the bitterness of death had nearly past, in the momentary expectation of the blow. And so sudden, so wonderful had been the change: her name blessed by the people who had been reviling her: and held up to their praise by him who never flattered man or woman in his life; her duty to her absent father bravely fulfilled: the heroic reputation of her house maintained without injury to friend or foe: it was impossible not to believe that the hand of God had been over her, not in anger, but in love.

Yes, though so long neglected, Lionel Revis's counsel was good: the miserable burden should oppress no longer; she *would* tell her father all! And strong in this bold resolve, she was able to stand up against all the fatiguing excitement of the evening, and whenever her eye met that of Mrs. Hargrave, to give her back a full, radiant glance, like the day-spring of a dawning liberty.

It was some time before the chivalry of the hunt and the parish could make up their minds to leave her presence: Sir John at last beat the retreat: observing with somewhat of a rueful shade on his jovial face, that the air felt quite frosty, and the wind was blowing up for snow. "Halloa, friend Matthew!" for the keeper was standing in the door to take his mistress's last orders, "curious sporting this, isn't it? battues on the stair-case, and snap shots through the ventilator, hey? what sort of Joe Mantons do you call those?" for Matthew was loaded with weapons, Indian, Spanish, and Transatlantic.

"I was going to ask Miss Eustace if they sh[illegible] be put back in [illegible] room, Sir John."

"Does my lord always sleep with such pretty little things under his pillow? I wonder he does not dream of Chartist riots every night. Miss Eustace, had you not better hang a revolver or two over your looking-glass, in case you may require them unexpectedly?"

Miss Eustace came forward to see what was going on, but started at the sight of the foreign artillery. "Where did you find these, Matthew? You did not go into his Lordship's study?"

"Indeed, ma'am, but I did," said Matthew firmly, "I knew there were fire-arms and powder-flasks there, and the door was kept locked, so I e'en broke it open. Mrs. Hargrave saw me do it, ma'am, and was sure his lordship would be satisfied with the reason."

"To be sure, to be sure," added Sir John, "satisfied? yes, and thankful too. If you had not done it, the mob might, and poaching Jack would have cut a fine figure after the hares with that smart long barrel, hey, Matthew? I wonder you let that fellow off so easy."

"It was no fault of mine, Sir John, that I did," said Matthew, glancing at his young mistress; "but I must make bold to say, though I doubted it at first, it was a good thing no shots were fired before Mr. Revis came: we should all have been murdered: the people were getting savage, and some one had told them Mr. Hargrave was here, and they wanted terribly to lay hold of him."

Mr. Hargrave started up from the seat where he had remained silent all the evening. "Sir John—gentlemen—my good friend Matthew—I must entreat an escort into Myrton; I dare not go alone, and I must sleep there to-

... paper to guard—[illegible] to [illegible] away, Sir John, do not think me encroach[illegible] [illegible]'s interest is my principal motive. Miss Eustace, you will persuade these gentlemen in my behalf, I am sure?"

"Persuade, my good sir?" said Sir John, in whose face Miss Eustace looked entreatingly, "no persuasion required, believe me. I am sorry you are unpopular: though I always told you how it would be: we will see you safely home, or do battle for you on the road. Come, gentlemen, we may ride as we like to-night; there will be snow to-morrow, and of course, some more frost. No wonder the Chartists are discontented; *I* never remember such a winter: and I have seen more than most of you."

